■ Lifestyle / F4

For 45th year, Mr. Blackwell lists the sad, bad, ugly in fashion

■ News / A2

Palace asks Roco advice on coco levy funds in SMC

■ Metro / A22

A boy for Osang's daughter, Bong's son

■ Metro / A23

Two more Nida murder case witnesses surface

■ Sports / A25

Heavily favored Pacquiao to get $1.75 million in Morales fight

Change in definition cuts jobless rate by 1.2M

WOW! NAG MAGIC NA NAMAN!!!

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

BY CHANGING how the unemployed is defined, President Macapagal-Arroyo has reduced the number of jobless Filipinos by 1.2 million, or

CHANGE/ A8

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER
BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS

Erap denies whooping it up in P.5M-a-month HK flat

HONG KONG—Deposed President Joseph Estrada has dismissed as "conspiracy theories" allegations that his trip to Hong Kong for medical treatment was a political ploy to slow his plunder trial in Manila.

In an interview with Agence France-Presse as he recuperated from knee-replacement surgery, the former matinee idol also hit out

ERAP/ A20

email: feedback@inquirer.com.ph Friday, January 14, 2005 ★★ 60 pages / 7 sections / Vol. 20 / No. 37 P18 website: www.inq7.net

15,000 cops on alert for Erap arrival

By Armand N. Nocum

THE PHILIPPINE National Police insists that no destabilization effort is in the works with the homecoming of former President Joseph Estrada on Saturday. But its security arrangements suggest that it is preparing for a massive protest rally, even a major uprising.

In Hong Kong, even with his new titanium knees, Estrada will not kneel to beg the Sandiganbayan for a six-day extension of his stay here despite the fact that his American doctor had recommended it.

Speaking briefly to the INQUIRER yesterday by phone, the ousted President said he had had enough of pleading to the antigraft court to grant his requests. "Ok *lang. Ayoko nang masyadong nakikiusap* (I'm done with making requests). I pity myself," he said, stating the ostensible reason he had directed his lawyers to withdraw his motion for an extension.

Estrada continued to insist that he had not broken court-imposed conditions by leaving the Hong Kong Adventist Hospital and staying at the Parkview hotel overnight. He said the court was only referring to his confinement when it limited his movements to the hospital.

"*Wala namang sinasabing bawal* (No restrictions were stated)," he said, adding that his four police escorts were with him when he left the hospital on Jan. 9 and returned the following morning.

Estrada said the police escorts assigned to him by the court could have stopped him from leaving the hospital had they viewed it as a violation of the conditions.

It was the police escorts who had reported that Estrada had stayed overnight at the luxury hotel-residential complex, and that he had his barber flown in from Manila.

15,000 COPS/ A20

HEADLINER Estrada interviewed by Agence France Presse on Wednesday in his "plush" Parkview apartment denies that he has been living it up. Asked about dinners with friends, "What's wrong with that?" he says. AFP

More plots to threaten GMA

VAL HANDUMON

IMELDA Marcos returns to Malacañang for the first time since the ouster of her family, and is welcomed by President Arroyo for the pearl anniversary celebration of the National Commission on the Role of Filipino Women.

Analysts say no one to unite opposition

By Volt Contreras and Fe Zamora

PRESIDENT Macapagal-Arroyo may be confident that she will complete her term, but it's likely that those six years in office will be far from smooth.

The Ibon Foundation, a think tank whose last opinion poll showed a continuing dip in Ms Arroyo's approval rating since April last year, yesterday said she would be facing more destabilization attempts this year in view of the opposition's becoming "active again" with the recent passing of its standard-bearer, Fernando Poe Jr.

Poe's death—and the massive turnout of fans and supporters at his wake—"reminded the people that he might have actually won" the presidential election on May 10, 2004, and signaled to them that they could now take his electoral protest "back to the streets," Ibon research director Antonio Tujan said at "Birdtalk," the think tank's traditional yearend press conference.

Rex Robles, a retired Navy commodore linked to coup attempts in the 1980s, told the Foreign Correspondents Association of the Philippines that the "germ" of mutinous sentiment was still alive in the Armed Forces, fanned by accusations that Ms Arroyo had cheated to win the election and scandals of corruption among the top brass.

But neither Tujan nor Robles sees an easy toppling of the Arroyo administration.

Tujan said that despite the opposition becoming "aggressive" this year with deposed President Joseph Estrada as its "titular head," he did not see any coup plot or another "People Power" succeeding.

For that to happen, "the opposition should be able to show that [President] GMA is part of the problem and convince the people that they are the solution," he said.

"Does that mean there will be a successful coup or people power attempt this year? Chances are, *hindi* (no)," he added, noting that "public opinion" still did not indicate that conditions were ripe to favor such undertakings.

Robles said that while individuals in the military were still interested in overthrowing the Arroyo administration, they were disunited and disorganized.

"They have, in effect, split up into several groups, each with their own separate sub-

MORE/ A20

ROMY HOMILLADA

JOVITO SALONGA: Legal opinion versus political reality.

Salonga dared: Lead impeach rap vs GMA

By Norman Bordadora, Fe Zamora and Philip C. Tubeza

A MILITANT group asked former Senate President Jovito Salonga to initiate the move to impeach President Macapagal-Arroyo, after he said that she was impeachable for obstructing justice in the plunder case against deposed President Joseph Estrada.

"We hope to see ex-Senator Salonga leading an impeachment case against Ms Arroyo for violating the rule of law in allowing Estrada to undergo (knee surgery) in Hong Kong," Fernando Hicap, Pamalakaya national chair, said yesterday.

Salonga also said that Ms Arroyo would do anything to remain in power, including bowing to the popular Estrada's wishes to buy peace for herself.

But he declined calls to lead a movement to impeach Ms Arroyo.

"My hearing is impaired. My sight is impaired, and I am just too old to lead any movement," the 84-year-old Salonga said yesterday.

He said Kilosbayan and Bantay Katarungan, which he

SALONGA/ A20

RP farmer tells skeptics biotech crops helping poor

SAN FRANCISCO—A Filipino farmer on Wednesday argued at a US news conference that genetically modified plants were helping to alleviate poverty and hunger in the Philippines and other developing nations by improving crop yields and cutting expenses through less use of pesticides.

Edwin Paraluman, a farmer from the Philippines who joined leading biotechnology proponent Olive Clive James in a conference call with reporters, said the planting of genetically engineered corn last year yielded him 40 percent more crop than usual.

"The benefits for the small farmer are great," Paraluman said.

Filipino farmers grew nearly

RP FARMER/ A8

'Noynoy' says NPA out to liquidate him

By Cynthia D. Balana and Delfin T. Mallari Jr.
PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

TARLAC Rep. Benigno Aquino "Noynoy" III yesterday claimed that he had been marked for assassination by the communist New People's Army in connection with the violent dispersal of striking sugar workers at the Hacienda Luisita in his province.

Aquino said he received intelligence information on or before Dec. 10 last year that identified him as among the "priority targets" in the NPA hit list. He did not elaborate.

Gregorio "Ka Roger" Rosal, spokesperson of the Communist Party of the Philippines, denied the allegation, saying that the lawmaker was not yet an NPA target.

"I assure Noynoy that it's not yet his time. He still has to face trial before the special people's court, along with other members of the Cojuangco family and Labor Secretary Patricia Sto. Tomas," Rosal said in a mobile phone interview.

Aquino, son of former President Corazon Aquino whose family owns the vast sugar

NOYNOY/ A10

Sandy Romualdez, 5 other Pinoys in Asia Inc.'s 'Who's Hot' listing

By Jerry E. Esplanada

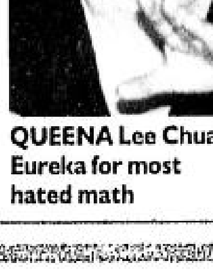
THEY'RE all "hot"—INQUIRER president Sandy Prieto-Romualdez, columnist and mathematics professor Queena Lee-Chua, rescued hostage Angelo de la Cruz, Gawad Kalinga international volunteer Dylan Wilk, Web pioneer Ken Ilio and magazine publisher Lisa Gokongwei-Cheng.

That is according to the Singapore-based business magazine Asia Inc.

The six also best represent the Philippines in the publication's annual listing of the continent's under-50 movers and shakers.

SANDY/ A6

SANDY Romualdez: Delicate balancing act with passion



QUEENA Lee Chua: Eureka for most hated math

LISA G. Cheng: Never-before-tested formula works

WEATHER FORECAST

FORECAST: Northern Luzon and the Eastern sections of Visayas and Mindanao will experience mostly cloudy skies with scattered rainshowers and isolated thunderstorms. The rest of the country will be partly cloudy to cloudy with isolated rainshowers.

SOURCE: PAGASA

COMPILED BY: RAY LEYESA, PDI RESEARCH/01/14/05

Metro Manila	Partly Cloudy	**Iloilo/Bacolod**	Cloudy with Rains
Baguio	Partly Cloudy	**Roxas**	Cloudy with Rains
Tuguegarao	Cloudy with Rains	**Cebu**	Cloudy with Rains
Laoag	Cloudy with Rains	**Tacloban**	Cloudy with Rains
Clark Zone	Partly Cloudy	**Gen. Santos**	Widespread Rains
Tagaytay	Partly Cloudy	**Zamboanga**	Cloudy with Rains
Legazpi	Cloudy with Rains	**Cagayan de Oro**	Cloudy with Rains
Calapan	Partly Cloudy	**Davao**	Cloudy with Rains

Gov't to raise stake in SMC

By Dona Z. Pazzibugan

THE GOVERNMENT will acquire more shares in San Miguel Corp. to match the increased stake of SMC's partner, the Japan-based Kirin Brewery, according to the Presidential Commission on Good Government.

PCGG chair Haydee Yorac said the government has to do so to protect its stake in the food and beverage conglomerate, the biggest in Southeast Asia.

The government, through the PCGG, controls 27 percent of SMC's shares and claims another 20 percent being held by SMC chair Eduardo "Danding" Cojuangco Jr.

The government claims that the shares held by Cojuangco had acquired the shares illegally, using money from the coconut levy funds.

"We'll exercise our option to buy (additional shares) in proportion to our holdings," Yorac said at a forum of the Foreign Correspondents Association of the Philippines yesterday.

She said the government would buy the additional stake from unsubscribed shares to be issued by SMC. She did not say how many more shares the government would buy.

"We have asked our directors to make a report. The moment they declare [the price], we'll buy in order to protect our holdings," Yorac said.

The PCGG has five seats in the 15-man SMC board. The state-run pension funds, the Social Security System and the Government Service Insurance System, each has one seat, giving the government a total of seven board seats.

Cojuangco on the other hand controls a majority of eight seats: three seats from his disputed personal stake of 20 percent; three for the SMC management; and two for Kirin.

Two years after buying into the firm, Kirin announced on Jan. 10 that it has increased its stake in SMC from 15.6 percent to 19.67 percent.

It said it acquired the shares from the SMC Retirement Plan. With its increased stake, Kirin is on its way to acquiring another board seat.

Yorac said the government would not contest Kirin's increased holdings. "That's okay. That was a market transaction," she said.

But she stressed that the government would make sure that the sequestered SMC shares were not diluted until a time when these shares can be sold on behalf of the coconut farmers.

"Our coconut farmers have no interest in San Miguel. And government has no business to be in business because it is too corrupt," said Yorac.

She said the PCGG will borrow from the government-controlled United Coconut Planters Bank to fund the purchase of the additional SMC shares.

The PCGG affirmed its control over the 27 percent SMC shares after the Sandiganbayan antigraft ruled with finality last Dec. 28 that those shares were part of the coco levy funds and thus were forfeited in favor of the government.

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Roco advising Palace on SMC, Piatco row

By Gil C. Cabacungan and Michael Lim Ubac

ASIDE from getting pro-bono advice from former senator Raul Roco on its legal dispute with the Philippine International Air Terminals Co. (Piatco), Malacañang has also been consulting the defeated presidential candidate on its legal battle for control of the multibillion-peso coconut levy funds lodged in shares of San Miguel Corp. and the United Coconut Planters Bank.

Press Secretary Ignacio Bunye yesterday said that Roco and Palace officials may have "possibly" discussed in numerous meetings the government's legal strategy to recover the SMC and UCPB shares claimed to have been bought using funds from the levy imposed on coconut farmers by the late dictator Ferdinand Marcos.

Roco was a lawyer of the ACCRA law office in the 1970s, the same firm which set up the Coconut Industry Investment Fund that was used to funnel the levy collected from coconut farmers into blue-chip investments such as SMC and UCPB.

Roco was also an SMC director when Marcos crony Eduardo "Danding" Cojuangco was replaced by Andres Soriano III as SMC chair in 1986 under the Aquino government. Cojuangco regained control of SMC in 1998 under the Estrada administration.

The government is stepping up its bid to acquire the coco levy shares after the Sandiganbayan thumbed down Cojuangco's appeal to regain control of a 27 percent interest in SMC and 72.2 percent of UCPB.

Bunye said that there should be no question about Roco's motives for giving legal advice.

"Right from the start he has been very transparent on his position. We're benefiting from very good legal advice of Roco," Bunye said.

He said Roco has been giving free legal advice to President Macapagal-Arroyo since a month after returning from the United States for medical treatment on May 29, 2004.

He said the President and Roco met after the latter conceded the May 2004 election and they discussed the issue of opening the Ninoy Aquino International Airport Terminal 3, which they both supported.

Roco yesterday admitted in a mobile phone interview that it was his idea that the Naia 3 passenger terminal be expropriated "so that the Filipino people can use it."

Palace eyes private firm to run Naia 3

By Gil C. Cabacungan and Philip C. Tubeza

PRESIDENT Macapagal-Arroyo is proposing to get a private company to operate the disputed new Terminal 3 of the Ninoy Aquino International Airport and compensate the terminal's contractor, the Philippine International Air Terminals Co., out of the facility's earnings.

"We will have somebody operate [Naia 3], whether it is by bidding or by starting from the ante-bellum [before the conflict started] situation. Therefore, they [Piatco] can be paid partially from funds that we already have and partially from the earnings from the airport," the President told a forum at the Manila Overseas Press Club forum late Tuesday night.

She said the government had the $62.34 million even though Piatco has protested that it was stopped by the Land Bank of the Philippines from touching the money despite the court order.

A Pasay City court allowed the government to expropriate the Naia 3 following a Supreme Court decision voiding all contracts awarded to the Piatco consortium to build and operate the terminal.

Doubts have been raised, however, on the ability of the government to finance the takeover which would require at least P20 billion, or a tenth of the government's budget deficit.

Another legal complication was the ruling by the same Pasay City court ordering the government to pay Piatco an initial $62.34 million, even while it determines what would be "just compensation." *With reports from Nancy Carvajal and Michael Lim Ubac*

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Let prosecutors explain gov't blunders in drug cases, says PDEA chief

By Nelson F. Flores

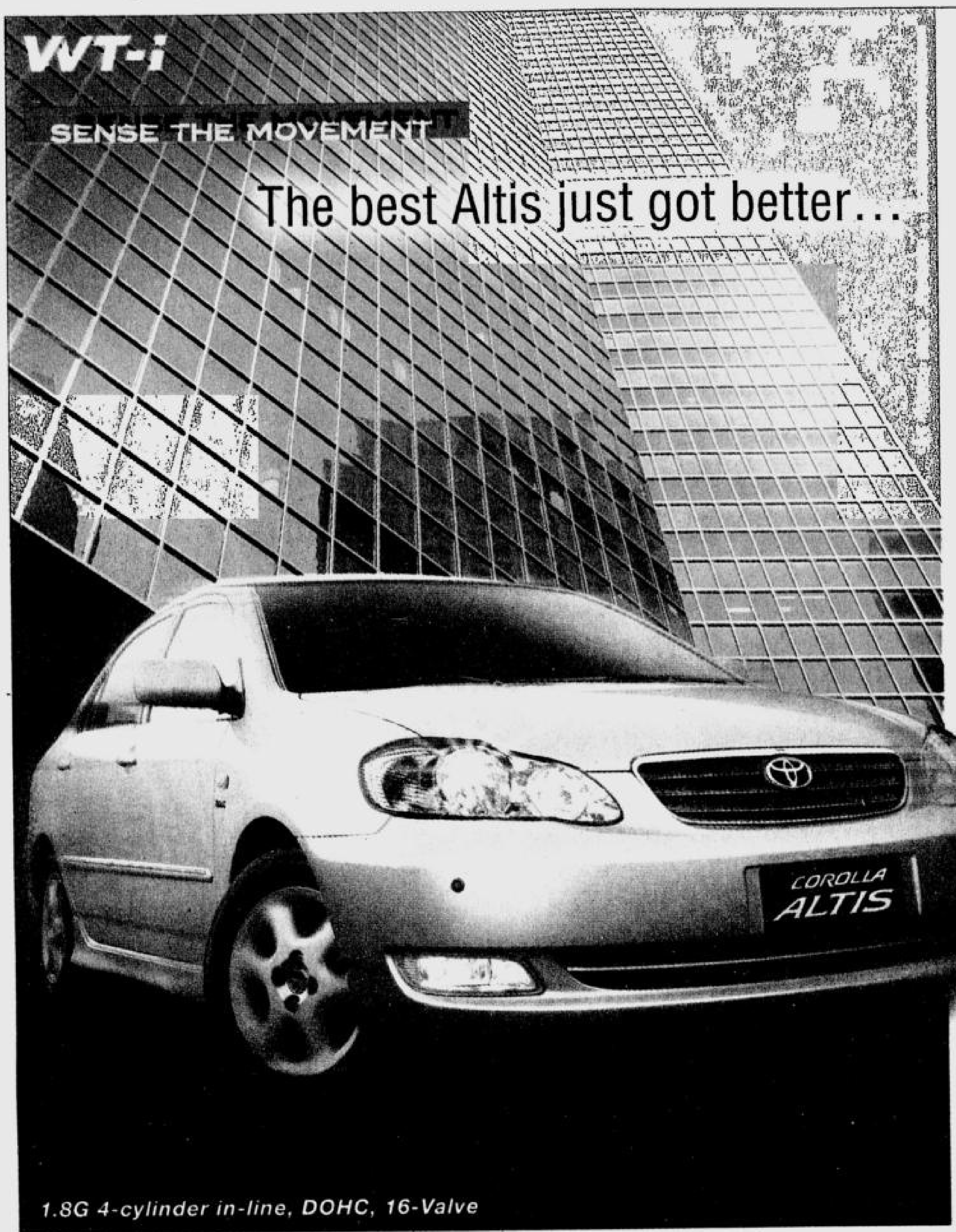
PHILIPPINE Drug Enforcement Agency Director General Anselmo Avenido Jr. yesterday said the national prosecution service should explain why only very few big drug cases went to court.

Avenido issued the statement in response to Cebu Rep. Antonio Cuenco's public outrage over the failure of the government to prosecute drug cases.

Avenido explained that after a successful operation, a case is immediately filed before the local government prosecutors' office for appropriate action and, once filed, the PDEA no longer has any say on the matter.

He also brushed off allegations that PDEA operations were conducted sloppily or illegally, stressing that every operation was done by the book and covered by the proper warrants.

"We would be swamped by charges by now if our actions are illegal," Avenido said.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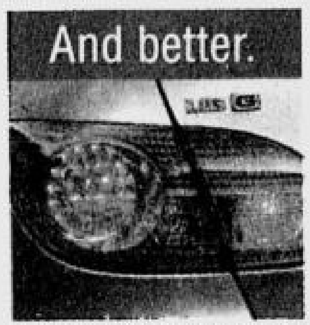

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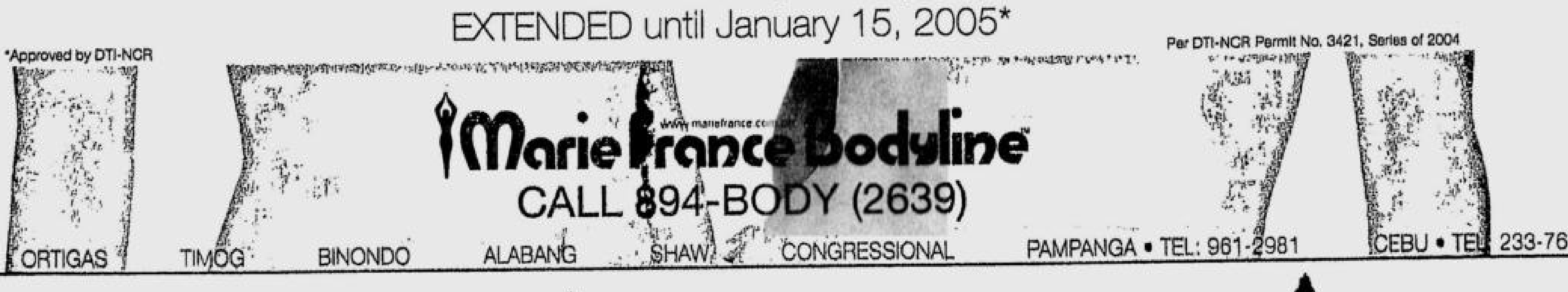

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2 more Moro rebs slain in fresh clash

By Alcuin Papa

TWO SUSPECTED members of the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) and a soldier were killed in a fresh clash in Maguindanao yesterday.

Reports reaching Camp Aguinaldo said the encounter occurred in Barangay Gambar, Kabuntalan, at around 6 a.m. after soldiers of Charlie Co. of the 6th Infantry Battalion and local policemen chanced upon a group of 50 armed men led by Max Mama, alias Usi Abo.

As of press time yesterday, the fire-fight was still going on. Pfc. Jerry Matalam was reported killed in the encounter.

Maj. Gen. Raul Relano, commander of the 6th Infantry Division based in Maguindanao, said two rebels believed to be members of the MILF lost command were also killed. He did not identify the two.

But Lt. Col. Julieto Ando, 6th IB chief, said the slain rebels were Usi Abo and his 20-year-old son.

Ando said Abo was involved in the rash of cattle-rustling and other crimes in Kabuntalan.

This was the second clash this week between government forces and Moro rebels in Maguindanao. Earlier, a military detachment in Mamasapano town was attacked and torched allegedly by members of the MILF.

The clashes occurred despite the cease-fire signed by the government and the MILF in 2002 ahead of peace talks, which are set to begin in February in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.

The Army's 6th IB said the latest attackers may have been among the MILF guerrillas who attacked, overran and torched the outpost of the 37th IB in Mamasapano on Sunday.

"We are not sure yet but that is a possibility," said Col. Franklin del Prado, 6th ID spokesperson.

But Eid Kabalu, MILF spokesperson, was quick to deny the Army's claim.

Kabalu said the slain men were not MILF members.

He said soldiers and policemen, accompanied by the town mayor, raided the house of Usi Abo in Barangay Gambal at about 4 a.m.

"Abo was also armed and had followers so they engaged the raiding team in a fire-fight. They managed to kill one soldier," he told the INQUIRER.

The military, meanwhile, gave the MILF 72 hours to surrender the two commanders who led the bloody raid on the detachment in Mamasapano on Sunday.

Armed Forces of the Philippines spokesperson Brig. Gen. Alexander Yano told reporters that Ustadz Wahid Tundok and Adziz Faizal (Abdul Rahman Binago, according to INQUIRER reports) would be treated as ordinary criminals.

"We asked them (MILF) to surrender their commanders within 72 hours starting 5 p.m. Wednesday. They did not promise. We will treat them as plain criminals," Yano said.

On Sunday night, around 100 MILF rebels led by Tundok and Faizal attacked a detachment of the 37th IB. The resulting fire-fight dragged on until Monday afternoon. By that time, 17 MILF rebels and six soldiers were dead.

Reports of torture

Yano also asked the MILF to return firearms, government property and personal belongings taken by the raiders during the attack.

He said they were investigating reports one of the soldiers held hostage by the rebels had been tortured. "(But) the findings were not conclusive. We will still validate this."

The general said that if they did manage to prove soldiers taken hostage during the attack had been tortured, "this would reinforce the government's evidence that, indeed, a crime had been committed by those wayward MILF members who attacked the detachment."

He also maintained that the attack in Mamasapano would not affect the ongoing peace negotiations between the government and the MILF.

The joint GRP-MILF Coordinating Committee on the Cessation of Hostilities and the International Monitoring Team (IMT), the local and foreign bodies, respectively, tasked to monitor compliance with the 2002 cease-fire signed by the two sides, are presently holding their regular monthly meeting in Davao City.

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Last 2 of 17 terror suspects freed on bail

By Christian V. Esguerra and Carlito Pablo

THE TWO remaining terror suspects of the 17 arrested last week at an Islamic center on Taft Avenue, Manila, have posted bail in connection with the guns and explosives possession case they are facing.

Afgani Alonto and Leonardo Ricalde each shelled out P180,000 and secured a release order from the Manila prosecutor's office at 2 p.m. yesterday, Alonto's brother Avenci said.

But as of 4 p.m., the Criminal Investigation and Detection Group had yet to receive a copy of the release order, according to Chief Insp. Jesus Kabigting, CIDG General Investigation Branch chief.

Bail was posted shortly after Muslim organizations demanded the relief and prosecution of CIDG officer in charge Rodolfo "Boogie" Mendoza and his men for the "bogus" raid on the Islamic Information Center.

"The President should not allow these men to get away with this crime," said Yusoph Ledesma, convenor of the newly formed Concerned Muslims in Metro Against Illegal Arrest and Discrimination.

The INQUIRER on Wednesday was furnished a copy of the CIDG intelligence report on which the controversial Taft raid was supposedly based.

Mendoza allegedly came up with operation "Green Archer" in which he painted a grim scenario of bombings and assassinations purportedly being cooked up by Islamic converts or "balik Islam."

But no less than the Intelligence Group, the Philippine National Police's main antiterrorism unit, ignored the plan due to its "many inconsistencies, imagined details strewn with certain facts," said a top intelligence official.

The source is a senior intelligence operative who was with the Constabulary Security Group in the late 1980's and later with its successor, the PNP-IG.

"We were invited to join the operation [in] December," he told the INQUIRER yesterday in an interview. "But after we analyzed the report, we found that it was full of fabrications injected with historical data to give it a semblance of truth."

The report was reportedly so flimsy that intelligence operatives quickly figured out where it had gotten its name. "It's because the terror suspects named in the report were allegedly former students or teachers at La Salle," said the source, laughing.

Sought for comment, Mendoza on Wednesday said he would "neither confirm nor deny" Green Archer.

"I'd rather not comment at this time," he told the INQUIRER. "But definitely, I stand by my findings. I won't gamble on my career by fabricating an operation."

The fact that 15 of the 17 suspects have been freed was a strong indication that the CIDG raid lacked merit from the beginning, the source said.

Price tag for Cha-cha: ₱80B

By Juliet Labog-Javellana

NO P80 billion, no charter change talk.

President Macapagal-Arroyo put the price tag on the administration-backed plan to amend the Constitution to change the form of government from presidential to parliamentary.

"I don't want to talk about constitutional change before we get our P80 billion in the bag," Ms Arroyo said in a forum marking the 60th anniversary of the Manila Overseas Press Club on Wednesday night.

Ms Arroyo said she had asked for a one-year moratorium on Charter change discussions to enable Congress to concentrate on the passage of new taxes and other fiscal reform measures needed to address the country's financial problems.

Ms Arroyo had asked Congress to approve eight taxes estimated to raise P80 billion a year. One had been passed and enacted into law so far—the excise tax on cigarette and alcohol products.

Leaders of the Senate and the House of Representatives also agreed on the moratorium late last year.

Speaker Jose de Venecia Jr. had said last year that the discussions on constitutional amendments could start as early as this month but this has been derailed by the delay in the passage of the tax measures and the 2005 national budget.

VAT hike bill ill-timed, headed for doom–Villar

By Michael Lim Ubac and Cynthia D. Balana

THE BILL proposing to increase the value-added tax from 10 to 12 percent now appears unlikely to be passed by the Senate.

Sen. Manuel Villar, the chair of the Senate finance committee, yesterday formally rejected the bill, saying it would "further burden the already impoverished and hunger-stricken Filipinos."

Sen. Ralph Recto, chair of the Senate committee on ways and means, also argued against the "hasty" passage of the VAT bill, saying the Senate would rather study the issue thoroughly.

Villar said the VAT rate increase was "badly timed" coming after the enactment of the bill increasing the excise taxes on cigarette and tobacco products, which he apparently believes will also burden the hungry and the impoverished.

Villar said a hike in the VAT would affect the middle- and lower-income classes more than the rich.

"This comprises the poor Filipino families who, based on recent surveys, can barely eat one full meal a day. The increased VAT will mean that taxes on the masses' staple food will be higher," he said.

Multi-tiered rate

In the face of these objections to the VAT bill, which has already passed the committee level in the House, opposition Sen. Juan Ponce Enrile proposed a compromise in the form of a multi-tiered VAT rate.

Under the Enrile proposal, the present 10-percent VAT rate would be maintained, while repealing certain VAT exemptions. He proposed imposing a VAT lower than 10 percent on products and services that are currently exempted from VAT coverage.

"Increasing the VAT by two percent… is not politically acceptable. The country cannot afford another problem. We should not go beyond 10 percent for products already subject to VAT. This is less abrasive politically," said Enrile.

He suggested that a six-percent VAT rate should be imposed on those products and services currently exempted from VAT while maintaining the present rate for those already covered by the tax.

Currently exempted from VAT coverage are the sale and importation of, among others, coal, natural gas, raw materials used in the manufacture of petroleum, non-food agriculture products, marine and forest products, agricultural and food products, poultry, livestock, marine products, fertilizers, cargo vessels and medical and educational services.

Finance Undersecretary Emmanuel Bonoan however argued against a multi-tiered VAT rate because it would "weaken enforcement" and "may result in misclassification or improper treatment of items on the borderline between distinct categories."

P50B a year

He said the single VAT rate was desirable because it simplified taxpayer's books and invoices, thereby encouraging self-assessment and voluntary compliance among taxpayers.

A single rate also facilitated audit and limited refund claims to essential exporters and enterprises purchasing large amounts of capital equipment, Bonoan told a hearing of the Senate ways and means committee yesterday.

The finance department has said that increasing the VAT rate to 12 percent would have a "full revenue potential" of P50.17 billion each year.

Repealing certain VAT exemptions would also generate an additional tax take of P28.15 billion, Bonoan said.

At the House, the chair of the appropriations committee yesterday called for an "inventory" of the latest income tax returns of doctors and lawyers to determine whether their VAT exemptions should be repealed.

Camarines Sur Rep. Rolando Andaya Jr. noted that the medical and legal professions have been enjoying P2.2-billion tax break a year.

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Sandy Romualdez, 5 other Pinoys in Asia Inc.'s ...

From page A1

This year's list of "Who's Hot" "spans businessmen and entrepreneurs, politicians and publishers, writers and film makers, sports icons and entertainers, and workers and activists, and PhDs in the fields of medical science and education. We even have a couple of restaurateurs—reflecting the Asian passion for food," wrote Asia Inc. editor Ho Kay Tat.

Cuts across all sectors

Unlike the usual list of Asia's richest or most powerful, the Asia Inc. list "cuts across all strata of society and all sectors. And yet, everyone on this list wields some power and influence in his or her own right."

The magazine had these to say about:

- Prieto-Romualdez: "She continues to do a delicate balancing act between ensuring profitability and adhering to the newspaper's corporate mission to deliver 'balanced news, fearless views.'

Pushing her passions

"Asked how the newspaper's and her current relations are with President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo, she takes a long pause and says, 'Professional.' After a long pause, she adds, "Civil."

Prieto-Romualdez "now uses her position to push her 'passions.' She co-chairs Tabang Mindanaw, a private non-governmental organization that helps southern Philippine farmers learn techniques to increase their yield. She co-founded Hands On Manila, which enables ordinary people to sign up for volunteer work with poor and disadvantaged children."

- Lee-Chua: "Mathematics is often the most hated school subject in the Philippines and its teacher the most feared. It is therefore highly unusual for a college math professor of 15 years to acquire a growing fan base across the country who often ask for her autographed photo."

Put fun, joy in numbers

"She has single-handedly managed to put fun and joy back into math through her classes at the Ateneo de Manila University, her weekly column "Eureka" in the Philippine Daily Inquirer, her almost two dozen books, lectures, teacher training seminars and even mind puzzles for cellular phone users. No mean feat, considering that most Filipinos are highly allergic to numbers."

Trend-setter

- Gokongwei-Cheng: "Instead of easing herself into a guaranteed senior executive post in her father's multinational conglomerate, [she] chose to strike out on her own. Using what she learned from the family business of food manufacturing, retail and real estate, this second daughter of taipan John Gokongwei has made a mark in magazine publishing by making a trend-setter of a never-before-tested formula—turning out licensed local editions of foreign glossies like Cosmopolitan, Good Housekeeping, FHM, Top Gear and K-Zone...After just nine years, her Summit Media has 20 titles, 14 of them licensed, and is still growing."

Shift in US-centered policy

- De la Cruz: "(The ex-truck driver and rescued hostage) single-handedly caused the Philippine government to abandon its US-centered foreign policy when Iraqi militants abducted him in July 2004. His kidnappers freed him in Baghdad after the pullout of the entire Philippine contingent from Iraq, upon the order of President Macapagal-Arroyo.

Filipino Everyman

"To a nation long sustained by remittances from overseas Filipinos—now comprising 10 percent of the population of more than 80 million—this father of eight, whose poverty drove him to work abroad, struck a chord in the native psyche and became a symbol of the Filipino everyman. His rescue, which angered US President George Bush, will continue to trigger aftershocks in Philippine foreign policy and push Arroyo to forge closer alliances with China and Middle East states."

'Hobby gone berserk'

- Ilio: "[The 48-year-old Fil-Am] is the most prominent native-born Filipino in cyberspace. He achieved this distinction without being in politics or the movies, but by doggedly maintaining what he calls "a hobby gone berserk" for the last 10 years. This has evolved into Tanikalang Ginto, or Golden Links, the most widely used web portal to anything Filipino. The website has created a cyber neighborhood for a multitude of overseas Filipinos and eased their painful longing for their homeland."

Int'l roving volunteer

- Wilk: "At 25, Wilk had $40 million in cash and a silver BMW M3, but he wanted so much more than just being known as the ninth richest Briton under 30. He craved a more fulfilling obsession besides selling computer games via the Web and direct mail through his start-up firm, GamePlay. He discovered a new passion with a Philippine governmental organization called Gawad Kalinga which, as the name suggests, makes donors "give care" and not just money. Now 30, the former GamePlay owner has since built 80 homes from the sale of his BMW. He is Gawad Kalinga's roving international volunteer and has since inspired at least three wealthy Filipinos to sell off their luxury cars."

Other movers

Also in Asia Inc.'s list of the region's under-50 movers and shakers are film-maker Zhang Yuan, athlete Liu Xiang, journalist Muzi Mei, Alibaba chair and CEO Jack Ma, actress, screenwriter and director Xu Jinglei and folk singer Dao Lang, all from China; microbiologist Richard Kao, march organizer Jackie Hung Ling-yu, PCCW chair Richard Li, political activist Leung Kwok-hung, movie director Wong Kar-wai, all from Hong Kong;

Taekwondo exponent Chen Shih-hsin, author Jimmy Liao, filmmaker Tsai Ming-liang, pop star Jay Chou, civil servant Lin Chia-lung, all from Taiwan; actor Yuya Yagira, swimmer Kosuke Kitajima, baseball player Ichiro Suzuki and aid worker Naoko Takato, all from Japan; Internet Auction CEO and president Jae Lee and Megabox CEO Kim Woo Taek of South Korea; Wahid Institute director Yenny Wahid, actress Rieke Diah Pitaloka, legislator Rama Pratama and presidential spokesperson Andi Mallarangeng, all from Indonesia;

Hip-hop artists Too Phat, filmmaker Ho Yuhang, travel show host Asha Gill and AirAsia CEO Tony Fernandes of Malaysia; parliamentarian Eunice Olsen and filmmaker Royston Tan of Singapore; elephant conservationist Apichatpong Weerasethakul, politician Apirak Kosayodhin, singer Tata Young, tennis player Paradorn Srichapan and media activist Supinya Klangnarong, all from Thailand; actress and model Aishwarya Rai, cricketer Irfan Pathan, political star Priyanka Gandhi, director and actor Rahul Bose, author Amitav Ghosh and sitarist Anoushka Shankar, all from India; and cricketer Shoaib Akhtar and fashion designer Sabyasachi Mukherjee of Pakistan.

Youngest

Ho said the youngest on the list, Chinese writer Chun Shu, is just 17, but "who's seen as a spokesperson for her generation after publication of her novel, "Beijing Doll."

"The cut-off point was 50, but most on this year's list of Who's Hot are in their 30s and early 40s and many are in their 20s, as befitting a continent where 70 percent of the population is under the age of 40," Ho added.

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Friday, January 14, 2005
1st Week in Ordinary Time

1st Reading: Heb 4:1-5,11
Gospel: Mark 2:1-12

Jesus returned to Capernaum. As the news spread that he was at home, so many people gathered that there was no longer room even outside the door. While Jesus was preaching the Word to them, some people brought a paralyzed man to him. The four men who carried him couldn't get near Jesus because of the crowd, so they opened the roof above the room where Jesus was and, through the hole, lowered the man on his mat. When Jesus saw the faith of these people, he said to the paralytic, "My son, your sins are forgiven."

Now, some teachers of the Law who were sitting there wondered within themselves, "How can he speak like this insulting God? Who can forgive sins except God?" At once Jesus knew through his spirit what they were thinking and asked, "Why do you wonder? Is it easier to say to this paralyzed man: 'Your sins are forgiven,' or to say: 'Rise, take up your mat and walk?' But now you shall know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins." And he said to the paralytic, "Stand up, take up your mat and go home." The man rose and, in the sight of all those people, he took up his mat and went out. All of them were astonished and praised God saying, "We have never seen anything like this!"

Commentary

Jesus is back at his new home, Capernaum, the house of Peter's mother-in-law. This is a house church where the Word is preached and the hunger for it spreads so that people bringing a man on a stretcher can't get near Jesus. But they are resourceful and ingenious. They climb on the roof, remove some tiles and lower him down. And Jesus sees their faith and comforts the man with words of forgiveness even though some teachers of the Law are horrified. They can rejoice in hope given, so Jesus puts it clearly: is it easier to forgive or to heal this man so paralyzed? And he commands him to get up and walk and he obeys and walks away! The crowd is awed and praises God.

What of us? Does our religious correctness keep us from rejoicing in the Good News of forgiveness to each and everyone? Do we think it's easier to heal physical ills in a community than it is to forgive one another? Is our faith as imaginative and hardworking as the faith of this man's friend was? Small church communities are where we must practice all this.

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SUPREME COURT DOCTRINES

CIVIL LAW (OBLIGATIONS AND CONTRACTS)—Delay—Delay as used in article 1169 of the New Civil Code is synonymous to default or mora which means delay in the fulfillment of obligations. It is the non-fulfillment of the obligation with respect to time. In order for the debtor to be in default, it is necessary that the following requisites be present: (1) that the obligation be demandable and already liquidated; (2) that the debtor delays performance; and (3) that the creditor requires the performance judicially or extrajudicially. In the case at bar, the obligation was already due and demandable after the lapse of the two-year period from the execution of the contract. Furthermore, the obligation is liquidated because the debtor knows precisely how much he is to pay and when he is to pay it. Petitioner delayed in the performance. The demand letter sent to the petitioner was in accordance with an extra-judicial demand contemplated by law. [Citations omitted.] [First Division, Justice Quisumbing, Santos Ventura Hocorma Foundation, Inc. vs Santos, G.R. No. 153004, November 4, 2004] BY R. B. VERA

RP, Japan still in dialogue over Japayukis

By Jerome Aning

THE DEPARTMENT of Foreign Affairs yesterday said there was no specific date yet for Japan's implementation of new qualifications for Filipino overseas performing artists (OPAs) being deployed there.

Foreign Undersecretary for Migrant Workers Affairs Jose Brillantes said OPAs in Japan who were reported to be preparing for the worst and beginning to pack up for their eventual return to the Philippines may have been driven by "unjustified fear."

"We're still in the dialogue stage. Although there has been an action plan, there has been no implementing measure yet. An appropriate ministerial act should first be issued," Brillantes explained in an interview.

Ambassador to Japan Domingo Siazon Jr., who is in Manila to prepare for the visit of the Japanese finance minister this week, said he was still counting on the Philippines' friends in Japan's parliament to amend or reconsider the law that requires OPAs to have at least two years of schooling or two years of experience outside Japan.

Siazon told reporters that Manila would push for other points of adjustment, including a proposal that Tokyo make the law nonretroactive and count OPAs' previous years of experience in Japan as a qualification for reentry to the country.

When asked what he thought the negotiations would result in, Siazon said, "We have realistic expectations."

Sectoral Rep. Florencio "Bem" Noel, meanwhile, asked Congress to act now before "economic havoc of tsunamic force" is wreaked on the country when Japan implements the new immigration policy.

Noel filed a resolution for the House of Representatives to prod strongly the Arroyo administration to act swiftly in coming to the rescue of hundreds of thousands of Filipino entertainers expected to be displaced.

However, Noel said in a press statement that he was optimistic that Japan, being a staunch ally of the Philippines, would grant an official request to hold off legislation of the law.

Japan's anti-human smuggling campaign came on the heels of a US State Department Report citing Japan and the Philippines as countries on the verge of losing their war against human trafficking. The move is expected to affect the entire entertainment export industry of the Philippines, its ancillary businesses, its employees and millions of their dependents.

AFS head coming for RP visit

THE PRESIDENT of the AFS (American Field Services) International, Leslie Bains, will be coming for Jan. 16-18 visit arranged by ARFP (AFS Returnees Foundation Philippines), the AFS affiliate in the Philippines.

Ms Bains was brought to AFS International in June last year to help strengthen its long-standing efforts to build intercultural learning through international exchange of students and young adults, according to its press statement.

AFS in the Philippines is figuring prominently in the AFS plans for the future. It is also a recipient of a major US government grant arranged by AFS that is intended to benefit deserving students who have limited access to educational opportunities.

"AFS is a worldwide network of over 30,000 active volunteers in more than 50 countries dedicated to the promotion of intercultural understanding through educational youth exchanges," said Bains before embarking on her Asian trip.

The AFS Returnees Foundation Philippines, an organization of former AFS high school exchange scholars, will hold its annual general meeting on Monday at the Ballroom of the Mandarin Hotel in Makati with Bains leading the special guests.

The Philippines rejoined the AFS network in 2003 and is already an actively contributing AFS Partner with exchanges involving the United States, Japan, Belgium, Italy, New Zealand and Panama.

During her visit, Bains will meet with officials from the Department of Education and the US Embassy.

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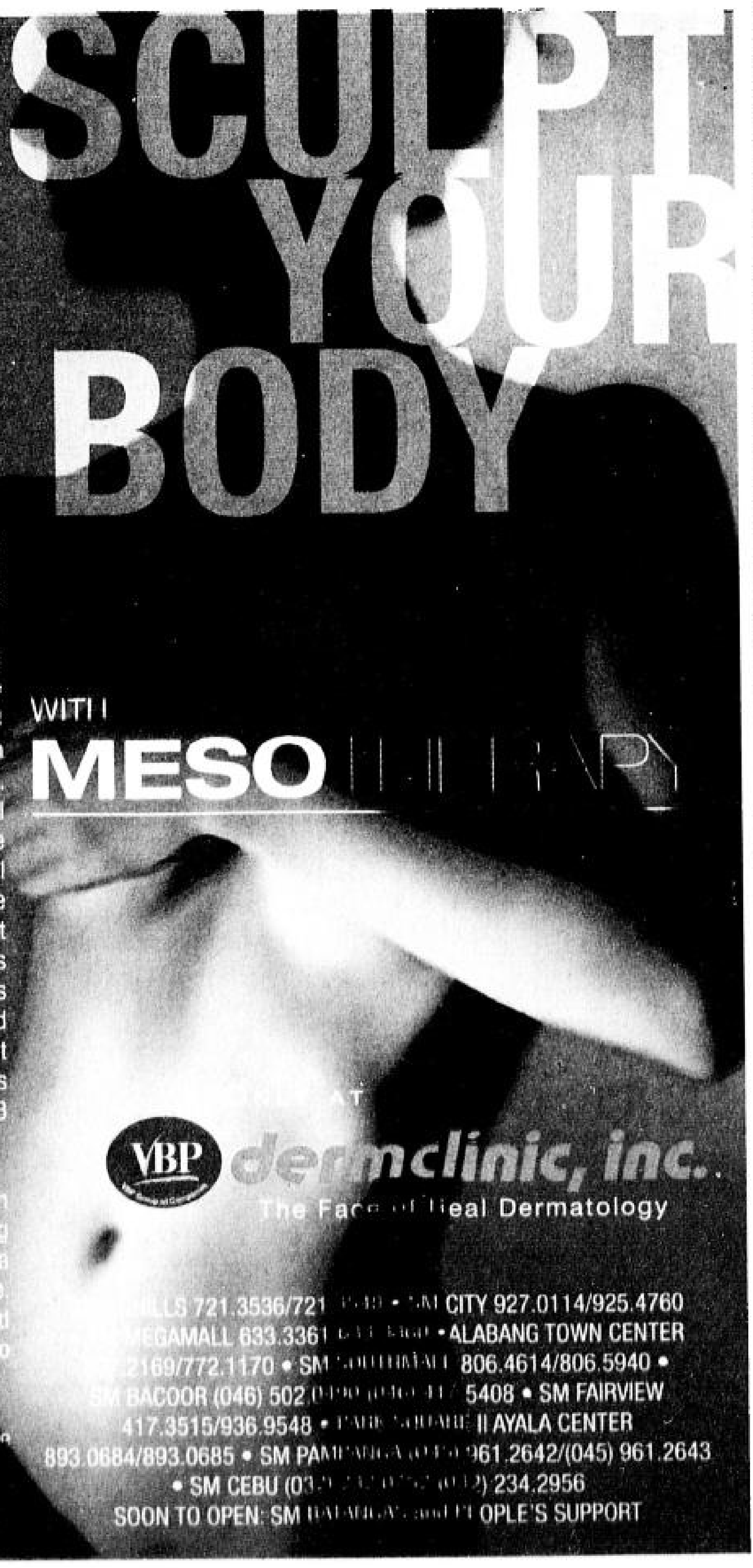

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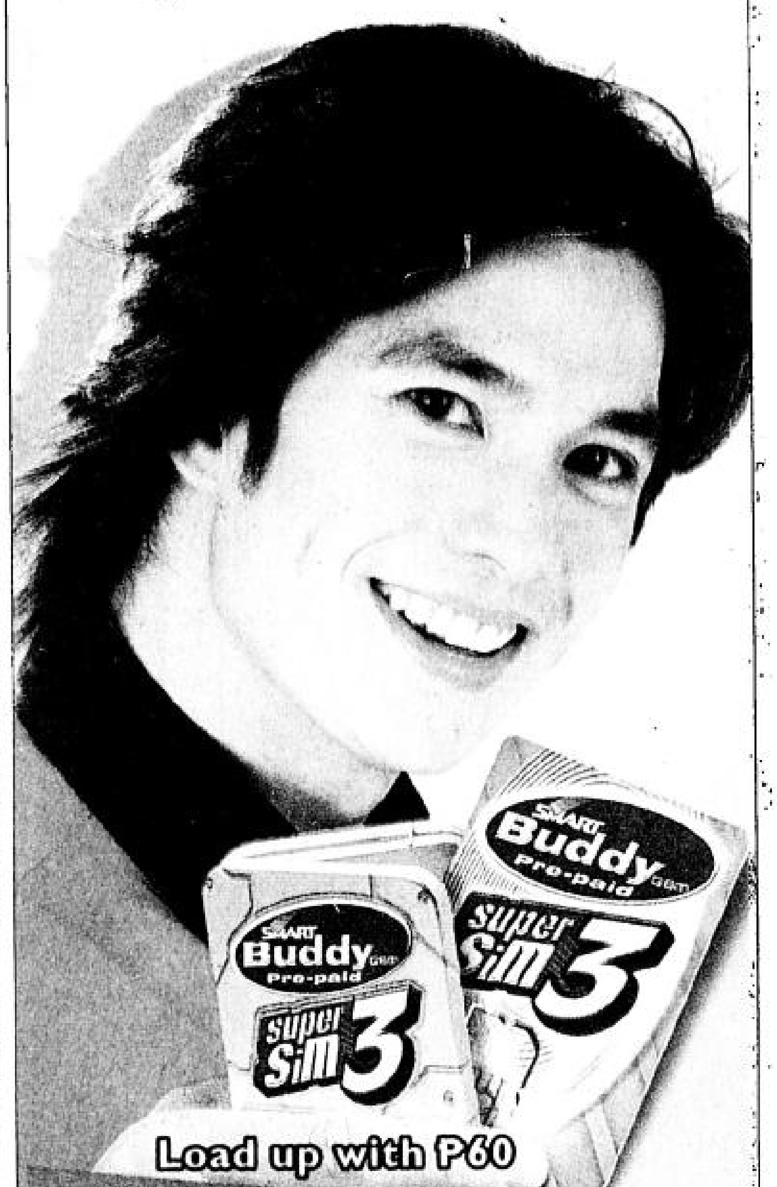

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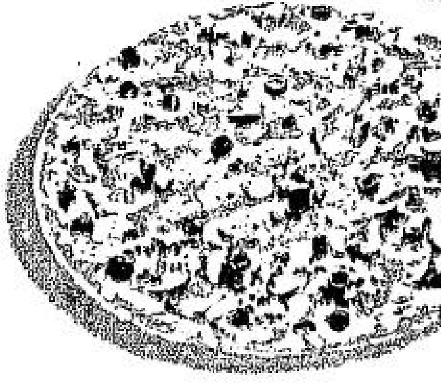

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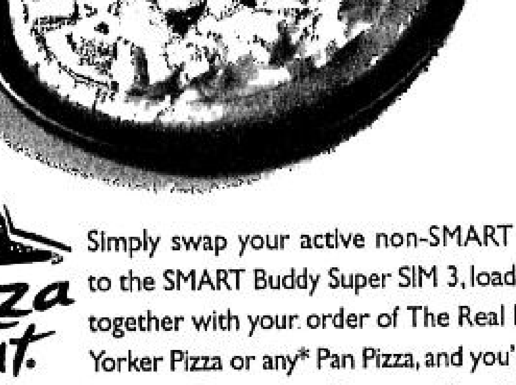

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Change in definition cuts jobless rate by 1.2M

From page A1

equivalent to the entire population of Davao City.

At the Manila Overseas Press Club forum on Wednesday night, the President, an economist, said "the unemployment rate is not as bad as we originally thought."

Ms Arroyo said the unemployment rate last year should have been 8 percent and not 11 percent based on the new definition (of the unemployed) recently adopted by the Department of Labor and Employment.

"(Labor Secretary) Pat Sto. Tomas discovered something in measuring our unemployment. The system we inherited measures unemployment rate as the percentage of people who are not working. But the international standard of unemployment is those who are not working but looking for work," the President said.

"This is not the case when I was a professional economist. I do not know when this system was changed," Ms Arroyo said.

ILO concept

The President was citing the International Labor Organization's concept of unemployment, which was adopted by the National Statistics Office in the fourth quarter last year.

The change in definition reduces the size of the country's labor force (from 35.69 million to 34.18 million) and the ranks of the unemployed from 3.9 million to 2.7 million while maintaining the number of those with jobs. This has the effect of raising the employment rate.

The President said the old definition tended to be distorted because it counted as unemployed mothers who stayed at home or pensioners beyond 60 years old.

Job creation has been a key objective of Ms Arroyo since she assumed power in 2001. She claimed that she generated jobs for 3 million Filipinos in her first three years in office but this hardly put a dent on the unemployment rate, which stayed at peak levels during the period.

The President has promised to create between 6 million and 10 million jobs in the next five and a half years but critics do not expect much improvement in the unemployment rate because most of the jobs created under her term were seasonal or temporary—ranging from additional farm hands to street sweepers.

Population growth

Business groups have suggested alternative means to curb unemployment, such as boosting investor confidence to encourage more foreign and Filipino businessmen to expand or put up new businesses in the country.

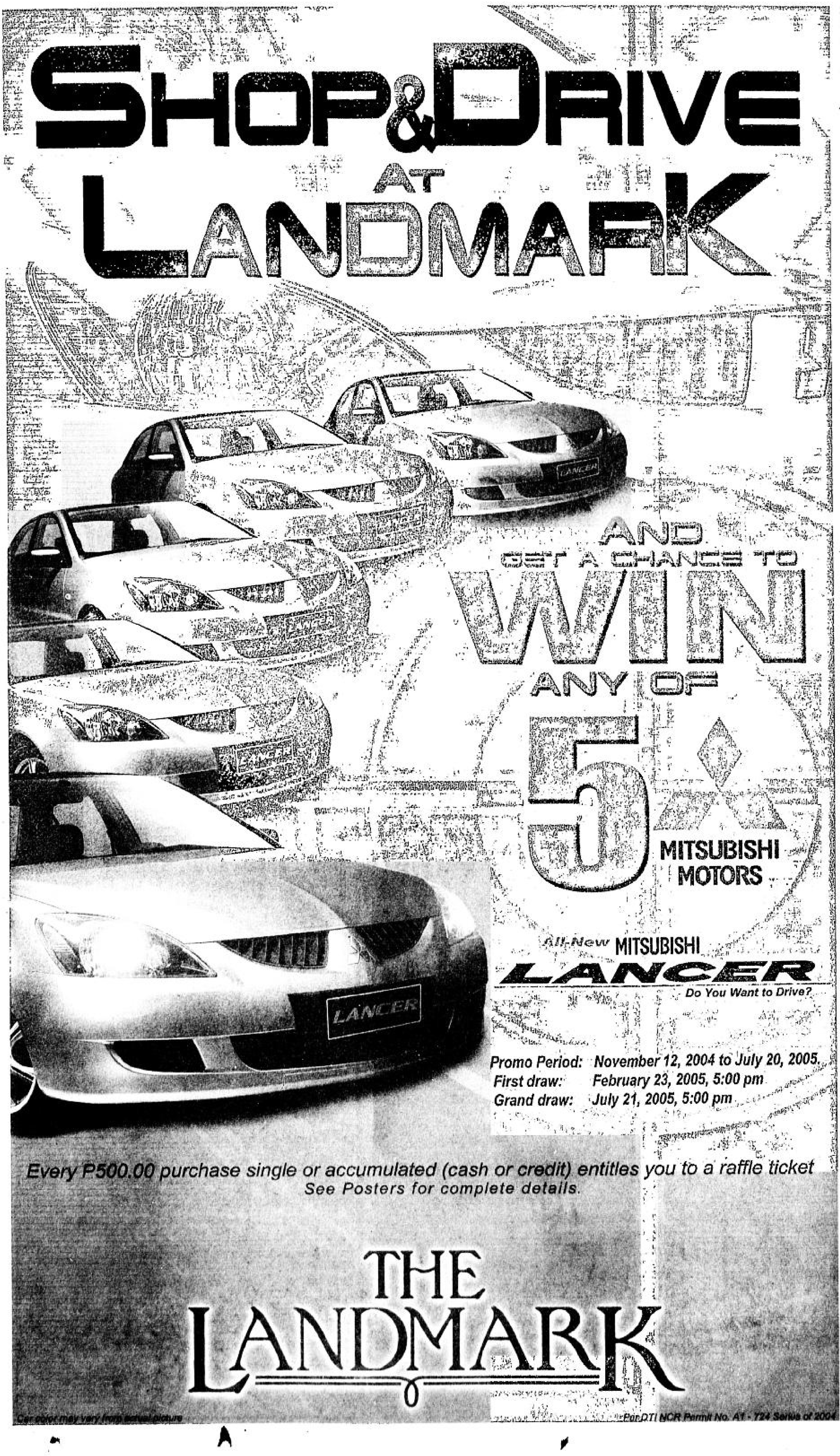
For the long term, business groups urged the President to curb the rapid population growth because there were just too many graduates or job seekers and too few job opportunities.

'Aggressive' education program

At the MOPC forum, Ms Arroyo said the government had decided to reduce the population growth rate in her Medium Term Philippine Development Program from 2.3 percent to 1.9 percent.

While the President remained averse to artificial birth control methods, she said her government would launch "a very aggressive" education program on family planning and responsible parenthood.

FEISTY as ever, PCGG Chair Haydee Yorac during a forum of the Foreign Correspondents Association of the Philippines on Thursday declares that the government will make sure it keeps its five board seats in San Miguel Corp. REM ZAMORA



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RP farmer . . .

From page A1

100,000 hectares (250,000 acres) of engineered corn in 2004, the second year altered crops were approved commercially there.

Farmers around the globe planting genetically engineered crops enjoyed another bumper harvest last year even as political and financial pressure mounted from skeptical consumers in Europe and pockets of the United States, according to a report released by the International Service for the Acquisition of Agri-Biotech Applications.

17 countries

The report was paid for by two philanthropic groups, including the Rockefeller Foundation.

Eight million farmers in 17 countries grew engineered crops on 80 million hectares (200 million acres) last year, a 20 percent increase over the 66.8 million hectares (167 million acres) in 2003, according to the report.

Corn, soy, canola and cotton accounted for nearly all commercially available biotech crops.

In 1996, the first year genetically modified crops were commercially available, about 1.72 million hectares (4.3 million acres) were under biotechnology cultivation.

New era of growth

"The technology is probably poised to enter a new era of growth," said Olive Clive James, founder and chair of International Service for the Acquisition of Agri-Biotech Applications. The group promotes the use of the technology in poor countries.

James estimated that the number of biotech crop acreage could double by 2010, spurred on by China's expected approval to grow genetically engineered rice as soon as possible this year.

The most popular biotechnology crops contain bacteria genes that make the plants resistant to either bugs or weed killers.

The three biggest biotech crop producers in 2004 were the United States, Argentina and Canada, where nearly all the country's canola is genetically engineered.

The other countries cultivating biotech crops were, in order of output—Brazil, China, Paraguay, India, South Africa, Uruguay, Australia, Romania, Mexico and Spain.

The 47.2 million hectares (118 million acres) grown in the United States in 2004 represents an 11-percent increase over 2003's 42.4 million hectares (106 million acres). Soy and corn were the dominant crops.

Resistance

The continued growth of biotech crops and the group's rosy outlook for the technology comes amid often fierce resistance in Europe and in parts of the United States from consumers worried about how the crops may affect people's health and the environment.

The European Union ended a six-year moratorium on new genetically modified foods in May, despite widespread public concern about such products.

Still, consumer skepticism runs high in Europe and few—if any—biotech crops are expected to reach the market there in the near future.

Earlier this year, biotechnology titan Monsanto Co. of St. Louis announced it was shelving plans to commercialize genetically engineered wheat because of widespread public resistance. *AP*

Bishop slams gov't's ₱100-M family planning drive

By Blanche S. Rivera

AS EXPECTED, a member of the Catholic Church would have something to say about the government's Ligtas-Buntis 2005 campaign.

Pangasinan Archbishop Oscar Cruz slammed the unprecedented P100-million nationwide education campaign on family planning as disrespectful of the people's basic right to procreate within marriage.

"First, there was the 'ligtas-tigdas.' Now there is the 'ligtas-buntis 2005,'" Cruz said, referring to the government's nationwide campaign for responsible parenthood.

"What is supposed to be sacred such as human sexuality has now become a dangerous liability. What is to be treated with dignity such as human pregnancy is now considered a dirty disease," he said.

The Department of Health would kick off its Ligtas-Buntis 2005 on Feb. 21, deploying at least 15,000 health workers with volunteers from the party-list group ALAGAD and other non-government organizations.

The month-long campaign would employ the strategy used in the past Ligtas-Tigdas campaigns to vaccinate against measles. The health workers would give information on family planning and distribute contraceptives to couples who prefer artificial methods.

No population problem

The Catholic Church approves only of the use of natural family planning methods but opposes the use of contraceptives or the idea of population control.

The Catholic clergy maintains that there is no population problem and that the Philippines' 84-million population is actually an asset to the economy.

"When shall this country, treat its citizens with respect and deference? When will it learn to make its people its precious asset as they really are? When will it truly acknowledge that it is its population, as the OFWs, that keep it somehow economically afloat?" Cruz said.

He lamented that the population has often been blamed for poverty when it was bad governance that has misused and abused the population.

"People are either a curse or a blessing—depending on how they are led and governed," Cruz said.

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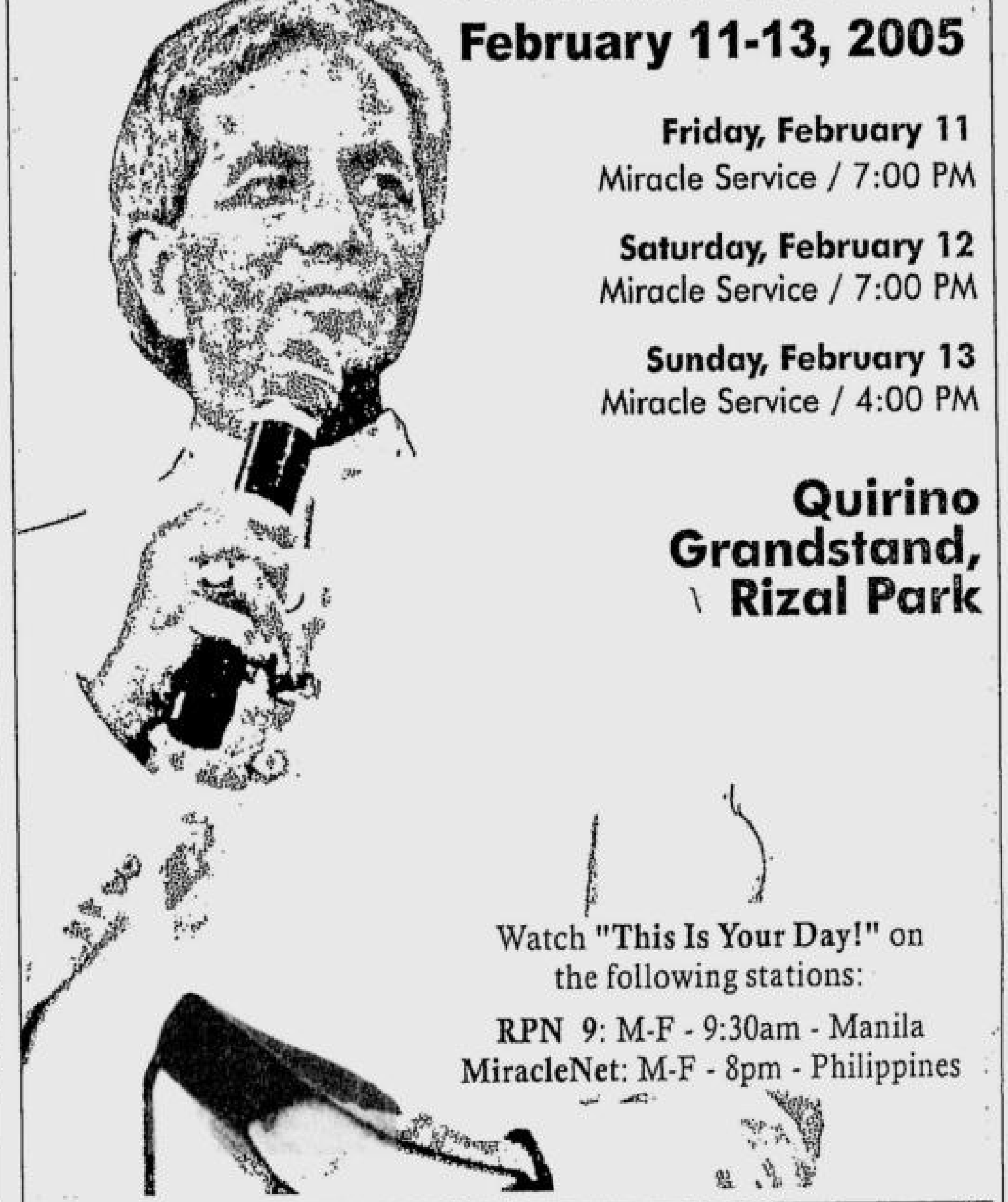

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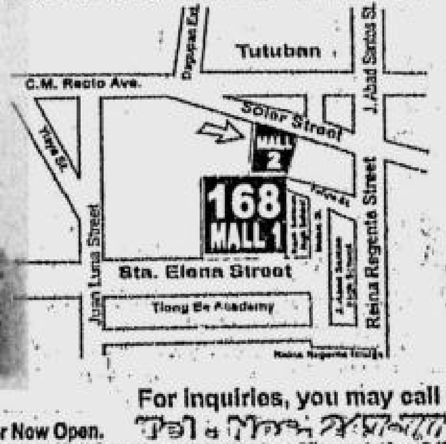

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A THRONG of Hacienda Luisita workers brandish their affidavits of complaint on their way to the Ombudsman's office in Quezon City to file formal charges of murder and frustrated murder against officials of the sugar estate in Tarlac. JOAN BONDOC

'Noynoy' says NPA out to liquidate him

From page A1

plantation in Tarlac City, said charges that he had a hand in the Jan. 5 dispersal of strikers at Hacienda Luisita were part of a communist campaign to discredit him.

His bodyguards were implicated by George Loveland, one of two sugar farmers who were wounded in the clash and who testified Wednesday during a Senate inquiry into the violence that erupted at the sugar estate.

Deaths, injuries

In November last year, seven people were killed and 121 others, including 11 children, were injured when soldiers and policemen fired at workers and their supporters at the plantation's main gate. The strike was mounted following a deadlock in collective bargaining negotiations between the workers and management.

Aquino stressed that his record as a congressman showed that he had championed the cause of human rights in the House of Representatives contrary to what the Senate witness was purportedly trying to project.

"I will be unfaithful to the legacy of both my father and mother by planning or even contemplating violations of human rights, especially against the persons of my constituents whom I have sworn to serve," he said.

The lawmaker's father, former Sen. Benigno Aquino Jr., was assassinated on Aug. 21, 1983 upon his return to Manila from self-exile in the United States. The killing set off a groundswell of protest, culminating in a civilian-backed military uprising that overthrew the Marcos dictatorship in 1986.

Cory's advice

Congressman Aquino said he was not about to file perjury charges against Loveland and others who had allegedly tried to besmirch his reputation.

He reiterated that none of his bodyguards were present in Tarlac during the latest confrontation. "My mother has reminded me that those of us in the public service must have greater understanding and patience than any other individual," he said.

Since the start of the labor dispute, Aquino said his trips had always centered on defusing the tension.

The only thing that I am guilty of is trying to arrive at a just and true solution to the ongoing conflict in the hacienda," he added.

NPA charges

Communist spokesperson Rosal said NPA leaders in Central Luzon had been preparing criminal charges against Aquino and other members of the Cojuangco family, and Sto. Tomas.

All the accused will be summoned to appear before a "people's court," which will hear all the charges against them, he said.

Should the "court" find them guilty "after an extensive and impartial trial," he said Aquino would not be alone during the execution of the punishment.

"*Hindi mag-iisa si Noynoy* (Noynoy will not be alone)," Rosal said, referring to the battle cry that united opposition forces against the Marcos regime following the elder Aquino's murder at the airport tarmac. The rebel leader did not elaborate.

"I don't want to preempt the people's court," he said.

'Far from over'

Aquino said he was optimistic that the results of the congressional inquiry would clear all controversies hounding the hacienda.

While he admitted that the labor issue was "far from over," he said he believed that the results would address major concerns like what actually transpired during the violent dispersal last year; the police and military action during the incident, and questions on the alleged human rights violations of workers who did not participate in the strike.

Aquino chided former Central Luzon Police Director Enrique Galang for allegedly failing to maintain peace and order at Luisita.

This resulted in the intimidation and harassment of workers who did not sympathize with the striking workers, the lawmaker said. He cited several incidents in which workers' houses were stoned.

He also said that even his right to free access to his house was being violated as he had to go through the checkpoint set up by the strikers.

Murder raps

The militant Kilusang Magbubukid ng Pilipinas (KMP) on Thursday filed before the Ombudsman charges of multiple murder and serious physical injuries against the Cojuangco family, the management of Hacienda Luisita Inc. (HLI), the Armed Forces of the Philippines and the Philippine National Police.

The charges were in connection with the Nov. 16 deaths of at least seven protesters after the police and the military dismantled barricades set up by workers in front of Central Azucarera de Tarlac. *With reports from Jo Martinez-Clemente and Russell Arador, PDI Central Luzon Desk*

Cojuangcos may close sugar mill

REP. NOYNOY Aquino said it was likely that the Cojuangco family would close down the Central Azucarera de Tarlac due to the sugar mill's growing obligations and losses.

Aquino, who joined the joint inspection and public hearing of the House committees on human rights and labor on Thursday, said this was the sentiment of the other members of the family as the labor conflict remained unresolved with only two months left into the sugar milling season.

The mill would likely be closed if the people did not like them anymore, he said. "It is also a question of throwing [away] good money ... the obligations have mounted," he said.

But he said that if the majority of the workers wanted them to stay, family members could not turn their backs as they had the moral obligation to take care of their workers.

Appeal to GMA

Sugarcane planters in Tarlac have asked President Macapagal-Arroyo to take extralegal action over the conflict so the sugarcane planted outside Luisita could be processed.

Marcelino Aganon Jr., CAT Planters Association president, asked members of the congressional committees to recommend to the President the takeover of the sugar mill to avert the loss of their sugarcane value.

CAT mills an average of one million tons of sugarcane per mill, 70 percent of which comes from sugarcane fields outside Luisita.

Romeo Ecraela, CAT public affairs manager, said 18 percent of the average production had been milled when the strike broke out in November last year.

Aganon said the planters were now forced to go to other mills, the closest of which is in Porac, Pampanga, or the Don Pedro Sugar Central in Batangas.

With the delay in the milling of their sugarcane, the sugar content of their harvest had already been depleted, he said.

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House committee OKs ₱125 daily wage hike

By Carlito Pablo

WORKERS, rejoice!

The House committee on labor and employment has approved a long-sought measure providing for a P125 daily across-the-board increase in salaries of all workers in the private sector.

House Majority Leader Rep. Prospero Nograles (Lakas, Davao City) yesterday said that he has received the committee's report that consolidated all proposed wage increase bills, which will be deliberated on the floor.

"This is a measure of hope for our workers," he said.

Nograles said that the committee on rules, which he chairs, will have to discuss when to calendar Committee Report No. 162 for second and third readings as the chamber is still in the thick of discussions on Malacañang-certified urgent measures, particularly tax bills.

"We assure our workers and other stakeholders that floor debates will be open as this matter is of urgent public interest," he said.

If approved into law, Nograles said that the bill would benefit 16 million workers and their dependents nationwide.

The bill approved by the House committee on labor and employment, which is chaired by Rep. Roseller Barinaga (NPC, Zamboanga del Norte), will benefit workers in both agricultural and non-agricultural sectors.

Among the authors of the bill were Reps. Edcel Lagman (Aksyon, Albay), Crispin Beltran (party-list Anakpawis), Rafael Mariano (party-list Anakpawis), Liza Maza (party-list Gabriela), Renato Magtubo (party-list Partido ng Manggagawa) and Eduardo Gullas (Alayon, Cebu).

Barinaga said that the bill also provides that employers who will fail to grant the increase will be subject to a fine of P25,000 to P100,000 or imprisonment.

"Current minimum wages have remained grossly inadequate to support decent living standards," he said in an explanatory note. "This highlights the failure of the government to provide economic relief to the workers."

Barinaga noted that the real value or purchasing power of the current P250 minimum wage for the National Capital Region has already fallen to less than P74 using 1989 as base year.

"This translates to a difference of around P125 between the current nominal wage and its corresponding real value in 1989 prices," he said.

Barinaga said the gap between the minimum wage and cost of living, which is estimated at over P460 as of June 1999 for a family of six in Metro Manila, ranges from a low of P260 to a high of P297.

"A P125 increase would partially restore the lost purchasing power in real value of the workers' wages over the last decade and would somehow close the gap between the income of minimum wage earners and the daily cost of living," he said.

Countdown on for CEU centennial

THE CEU Alumni Foundation Inc. is calling on all Centro Escolar University alumni to attend this year's homecoming on Jan. 29 at 2 p.m. at the CEU campus on Mendiola Street, Manila. Theme of the affair is "2005 Alumni Rendezvous at Good Old CEU: A Centennial Celebration Countdown."

The homecoming will begin the countdown to CEU's 100th anniversary in 2007, to which the entire university—administrators, faculty, students and non-teaching staff—is inviting the alumni.

This year's homecoming will feature food and drinks, singing and dancing and, more importantly, the chance to see classmates, friends and teachers again. Plans for the 2007 centennial celebration will also be revealed at the homecoming.

For more information, call the CEU Alumni Foundation Inc. at 735-9405 and 735-6861/71, loc. 249; e-mail lctiongco@ceu.edu.ph or bong_ceu_alumni_foundation@yahoo.com, or call your respective colleges.

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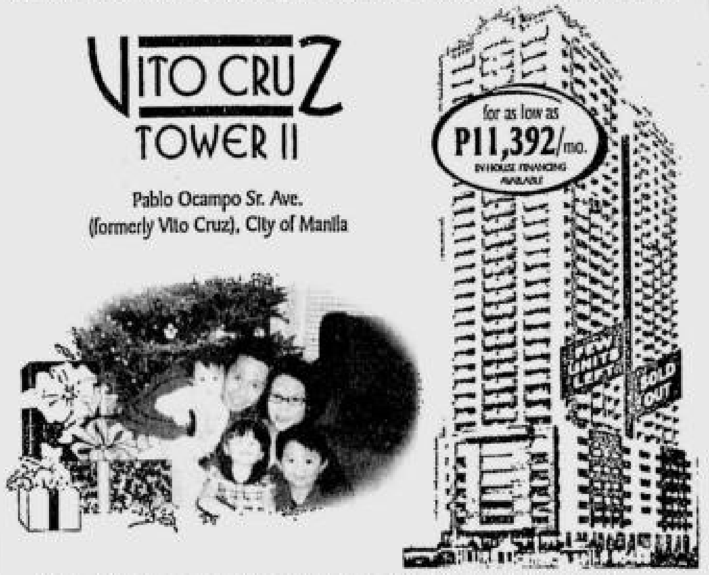
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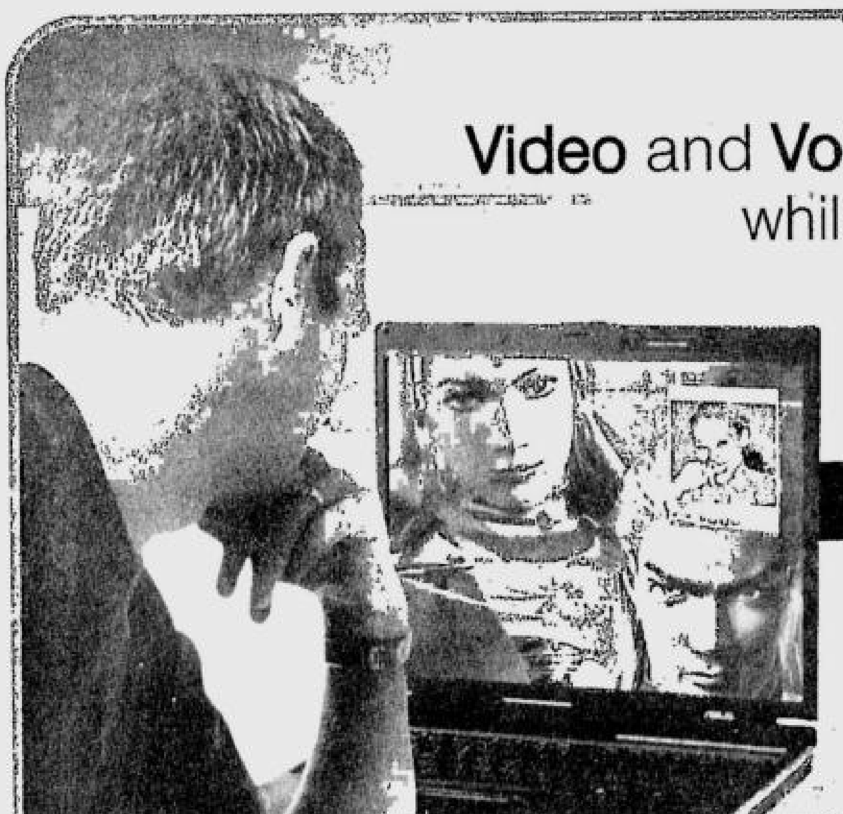
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The WORLD

Editor **Luverne B. Gueco**

Debt payments frozen for tsunami nations

BANDA ACEH, Indonesia—The Paris Club of creditor nations offered to freeze debt repayments for countries worst-hit by the Asian tsunamis and the Asian Development Bank said Thursday the disaster could throw nearly two million more people into poverty.

In Indonesia, which bore the brunt of the killer waves, the international relief effort pressed ahead despite military restrictions and separatist rebels in the devastated province of Aceh called for ceasefire talks with the government.

At a meeting in the French capital Wednesday, the 19-member Paris Club, an informal cluster of some of the world's richest creditor nations, offered an unconditional freeze on debt repayments for Indonesia, the Seychelles and Sri Lanka.

"This decision is an exceptional measure. It is justified by the scale of the catastrophe," club president Jean-Pierre Joyuet told a news conference.

The death toll from the earthquake and tsunamis that devastated Indian Ocean coastlines on Dec. 26 has topped 159,000, while as many as five million people are estimated to be homeless or without food and clean water.

"This measure takes effect immediately. It will allow countries affected to use all available resources for humanitarian needs and reconstruction," Joyuet said.

Detailed evaluations of needs by the IMF and the World Bank would allow the Paris Club to fine-tune its offer, in particular regarding how long it would remain in effect, the club said.

The need for supplementary measures would also be determined, with some political leaders and non-governmental organizations calling for debt restructuring or outright cancellation.

Debt payments owed this year amount to $3 billion for Indonesia, $328 million for Sri Lanka and $5 million for the Seychelles, though some of those sums may be owed to private creditors.

The Asian Development Bank said in a report Thursday that the earthquake and resultant tsunami would likely throw nearly two million more people into poverty in Asia.

In Indonesia nearly one million people are likely to be plunged into poverty by the lingering effects of the devastation, the report said.

In India the number of poor was estimated to increase by 645,000, with Sri Lanka's estimate at 250,000, it said.

About half of the houses in the Maldives were affected by the tsunamis and more than 50 percent of the population could fall into absolute poverty, resulting in 23,500 additional people falling below the poverty line, it said.

Meanwhile, the Free Aceh Movement (GAM), which has been fighting for the independence of Indonesia's worst-hit Aceh province since 1976, has called for ceasefire talks with the government.

The rebels' prime minister in exile Malik Mahmud said in a statement that his men were willing to sit down for discussions with Jakarta to ease fears over the safety of foreign humanitarian workers operating in Aceh.

"We are prepared to meet with (Indonesia) to agree the optimum modalities to ensure the success of the ceasefire and thereby minimize the suffering of the Acehnese people," he said. *AFP*

Prince Harry's Nazi gaffe triggers outrage

PRINCE Harry at rugby game. AP

LONDON—Prince Harry, 20-year-old grandson of the queen, apologized on Thursday after a photograph of him wearing a Nazi uniform at a fancy dress party embarrassed the royal family and provoked outrage in Britain.

The youngest son of the late Princess Diana and heir-to-the-throne Prince Charles was pictured in a newspaper wearing a red and black swastika armband and an army shirt with Nazi regalia at the party at a friend's house on Saturday.

The Nazi gaffe—just two weeks before the 60th anniversary of the liberation of Auschwitz—drew immediate condemnation from religious bodies, royal commentators and legislators.

"The incident was in bad taste, especially in the run up to the Holocaust Memorial Day, which the royal family will be playing a leading role in commemorating," the Board of Deputies of British Jews said in a statement.

Queen Elizabeth is due to host a reception for survivors of the holocaust on Jan. 27 before representing the nation at the Holocaust Memorial Day National Event.

Six million Jews and millions of other people—including Poles, Soviet prisoners and Gypsies—were killed or imprisoned by the Nazis in concentration camps or used as slave labor.

The photograph was published on the front page of the Sun newspaper under the headlines "Hitler Youth" and "Harry the Nazi."

"I am very sorry if I have caused any offence," Harry said in a statement. "It was a poor choice of costume and I apologize."

Conservative opposition leader Michael Howard, who is Jewish, said he was disappointed by Harry's actions and that many people would be offended. "It would be appropriate if we heard from him in person about how contrite he is," he told BBC Radio.

The British government said the matter had been dealt with adequately. "He has apologised and I think we should leave it there," said Education Minister Charles Clarke.

Former royal press officer Dickie Arbiter said that Prince Charles had "once again been let down by his wayward son." "It's just not good enough to behave like that," he told the BBC. "We all know history and at 20 that's no excuse.

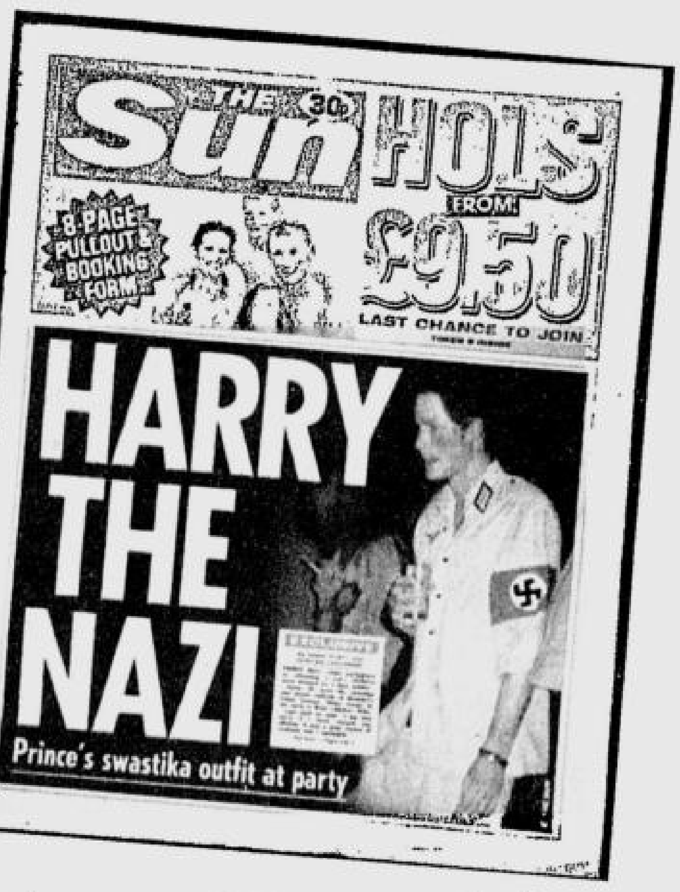
"A prince of the United Kingdom cannot get away with it and it's a bit naive to think that because you are going to a private party nothing is going to happen—they are fair game."

Former armed forces minister Doug Henderson was quoted as saying the picture showed the prince was "not suitable" for the army.

Harry, who is due to train at the Royal Military Academy Sandhurst this year, has earned a reputation as a royal "wild child" and has admitted smoking cannabis and underage drinking.

The picture of Harry in his Nazi outfit showed him with a drink in one hand and a cigarette in the other, surrounded by young people, including a woman wearing a native American dress and feathers in her hair.

The Sun newspaper paper said the party was themed "Native and Colonial," and among the 250 guests was Harry's older brother William, dressed as a big cat with black leggings and joke feet. *Reuters*



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Prince's swastika outfit at party

COPY of the front page of The Sun newspaper on Jan. 13. REUTERS

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More mudslides threaten Calif. town as deaths hit 10

LA CONCHITA, Calif.—Officials warned residents of a California hamlet on Wednesday that the steep hills overlooking their community could collapse again as the death toll from a mudslide rose to 10 with three still missing.

Rescue workers kept up their search for any survivors who may still be trapped in the 10 meter mound of earth that swallowed some 15 homes in La Conchita, about 130 km north of Los Angeles.

Part of a hillside that towered over the seaside enclave collapsed two days ago after weeks of drenching rain unleashed torrents of mud that buried a four-block area within seconds.

At a hastily called town meeting at an evacuation center, officials warned residents that more slides were likely and that the mud and debris were still moving and unstable.

"We consider that the whole area of La Conchita is unsafe," said Ventura County Deputy Fire Chief Dave Festerling. "We want people out of the area."

Residents and sheriff's deputies wept as the names of the 10 confirmed dead were read out.

But when the names of 10 other people presumed buried were read, four of them stood up in the room to announce that they had survived. This prompted a burst of relieved applause from 150 or so residents of the tightly knit town.

Sheriff's deputies found three residents who had been feared missing, suggesting that three adults remained buried under the debris.

Earlier, Ventura County Fire Chief Bob Roper had cautioned that the number of missing was uncertain because members of the bohemian beachfront community came and went without much notice. "Nobody signed a guest book," he said.

Meanwhile, emergency teams worked under floodlights using a borrowed radar system to locate holes in the debris where it might still be possible to find survivors.

Fire officials vowed to continue the search-and-rescue mission until at least Thursday night before shifting to a recovery effort for bodies.

Rescuers said they were racing against time as the mound of mud quickly hardened into the consistency of concrete. They were also wary of shifting too much dirt out of fear of triggering another slide.

Early in the day, emergency crews recovered the bodies of Michelle Wallet and her three daughters, Hannah, 10, Raven, 6, and 2-year-old Paloma.

The four were found on a couch where they had been waiting for husband and father Jimmie Wallet to return from a nearby store with ice cream. The slide crushed their home and drove it about meters from its foundation.

"They were sitting on a couch together apparently unaware.

It appears they never had a chance to get out. The room was flattened," said Scott Hall, head of search and rescue for the Ventura County Fire Department.

As the rescue operation wore on, controversy brewed over whether the town would be allowed to remain in the slide-prone area. A retaining wall built after a 1995 mudslide was swept away in Monday's disaster.

California Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger visited the area and threw his support behind rebuilding efforts once the search and rescue operations have been completed.

"In the past few days, we have seen the power of nature to cause damage and despair, but we will match that power with our own resolve," he told reporters. *Reuters*

Mark Thatcher admits role in Guinea coup plot

CAPE TOWN—The son of former British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher pleaded guilty on Thursday to a role in a foiled coup in Equatorial Guinea under a plea bargain that spares him prison.

The Cape High Court agreed to a deal for Mark Thatcher to pay a fine of 3 million rand ($500,000) or face five years in jail in South Africa, in addition to a further four-year prison sentence suspended for five years.

"There is no price too high for me to pay to be reunited with my family and I am sure all of you who are husbands and fathers would agree with that," Thatcher said on the steps of the court after the hearing.

He also agreed to assist South African authorities with their investigations into the plot against the government of oil-rich Equatorial Guinea.

Immaculately dressed in a dark suit and gold colored tie, a nervous-looking Thatcher repeatedly said "Yes, I do, Yes I do," when asked in court whether he agreed to the various terms of the deal, which allows him to leave South Africa to join his family in America for the first time in nearly five months.

Thatcher pleaded guilty to attempting to contravene section 2 of South Africa's anti-mercenary laws by agreeing to charter a helicopter, his lawyers said.

Thatcher, who has lived in South Africa for the past eight years, was arrested in Cape Town last Aug. 25 on charges of bankrolling a foiled coup in the oil-rich West African nation. *Reuters*

BEAUTIFUL FOOD

A handout picture from Bjorn Lindberg shows mussels lit up in a near heavenly haze. France is to host the first international competition for food photography when "SIRHA," a gathering of professionals from the world of food and catering, opens on Jan. 22 in Lyon. AFP

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US finally abandons long, fruitless hunt for weapons of mass destruction in Iraq

WASHINGTON—The US force that scoured Iraq for weapons of mass destruction—cited by President George W. Bush as justification for war—has abandoned its long and fruitless hunt, US officials said on Wednesday.

The 1,700-strong Iraq Survey Group, responsible for the hunt, last month wrapped up physical searches for weapons of mass destruction, and it will now gather information to help US forces in Iraq win a bloody guerrilla war, officials said.

"I felt like we would find weapons of mass destruction... like many—many here in the United States, many around the world," Bush told ABC's Barbara Walters, according to excerpts from an interview airing on Friday.

Bush said "we need to find out what went wrong in the intelligence gathering," and that the invasion was "absolutely" worth it even if there were no weapons of mass destruction.

Bush and other US officials cited the grave threat posed by Iraq's chemical and biological weapons and Baghdad's efforts to acquire a nuclear arms capability as a central justification for the March 2003 invasion. No such weapons have been found.

"You can only search so many places for WMD," said a defense official, who added that the ISG continues to review documents and interview people knowledgeable about deposed President Saddam Hussein's arms programs for possible leads.

Charles Duelfer, the CIA special adviser who led the ISG's weapons search, has returned home and is expected next month to issue a final addendum to his September report concluding that prewar Iraq had no WMD stockpiles, officials said.

White House spokesperson Scott McClellan said he was not holding out the possibility these weapons would turn up in Iraq. But he added that "based on what we know today, the president would have taken the same action" —war with Iraq—in order to "confront a threat posed by Saddam Hussein.

"And now what is important is that we need to go back and look at what was wrong with much of the intelligence that we had accumulated over a 12-year period and that our allies had accumulated over that same period of time and correct any flaws," McClellan said. *Reuters*

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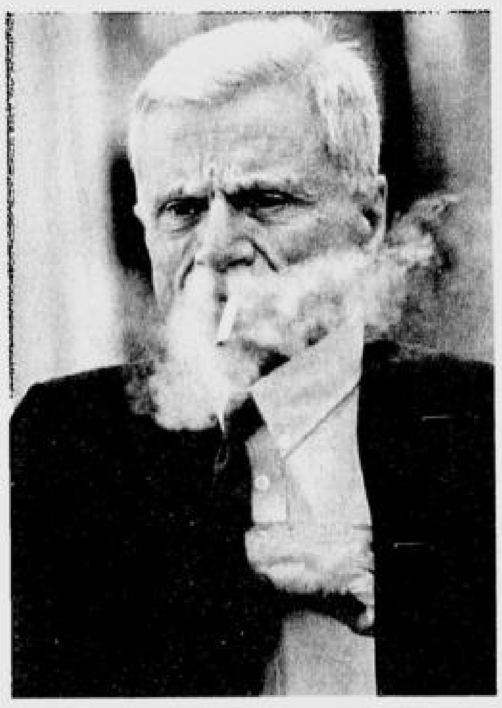
US actor Robert Blake smokes a cigarette as he leaves Los Angeles Superior Court, Jan. 6. AP

Blake's boots had gunshot residue, criminalist says

LOS ANGELES—The outfits actor Robert Blake and his wife wore at their last dinner together were displayed for jurors—hers with gunshot holes, his with minimal gunshot residue.

The veteran actor and his 44-year-old wife both wore black the night of May 4, 2001.

As Blake watched impassively on Wednesday, scientific witnesses for the prosecution donned plastic gloves and extracted clothing noisily from sealed packets of butcher paper and manila envelopes.

Gunshot residue evidence has been problematic in the case because on the night of the killing Blake had a handgun, which he said he carried for protection. That gun was not the weapon that killed Bakley.

Criminalist Diana Paul walked in front of the jury displaying a hole in Bonny Lee Bakley's jacket, saying it was probably a cut made by paramedics who removed the jacket from her body. She then identified holes in Bakley's jacket and blouse, which she said could have been caused by a gunshot. Bakley was shot through her cheek and shoulder.

Blake, the 71-year-old former star of the 1970s TV show "Baretta," is on trial for murder in the death of Bakley. He had married Bakley shortly before her death after learning he had fathered her baby.

Earlier testimony focused on small particles of gunshot residue found on Blake's boots after the slaying; another expert said such traces can be deposited even if a person has not fired a gun.

Steven Dowell, a criminalist for the Los Angles County coroner's office, told of testing Blake's clothing and boots for gunshot residue.

Dowell said the boots and clothes were bundled together in a box. He showed the shiny black leather boots to the jury and said he found "one highly specific particle" of gunshot residue on them along with "several consistent particles."

He said the majority of particles contained only lead and not the other components of gunshot residue, and could have been produced by environmental factors.

Another criminalist, Debra Kowal, testified she found gunshot residue particles on Bakley's hands, but said those could have resulted from a firearm being discharged in her vicinity and do not mean Bakley fired a gun.

Although there was no immediate testimony about what was found on Blake's hands, Kowal said on cross-examination that even if Blake had such particles, they could have come from other sources such as clothing or the gun and holster he was carrying that had no relationship to the crime.

"So a person could have (residue) on their hands and not have fired a gun in the recent past, is that correct?" asked defense attorney M. Gerald Schwartzbach. "Correct," said the witness.

Kowal also said that a person could pick up the particles by touching items that had been exposed to gunshot residue, such as a sweat shirt, the surface of a booth in a restaurant or the car where Bakley was shot.

The handling of Blake's clothes and boots has been attacked by the defense, which previously elicited testimony from a detective who said he threw all the items together into one box and carried them for two days in the trunk of a police car in which he also kept weapons. *AP*

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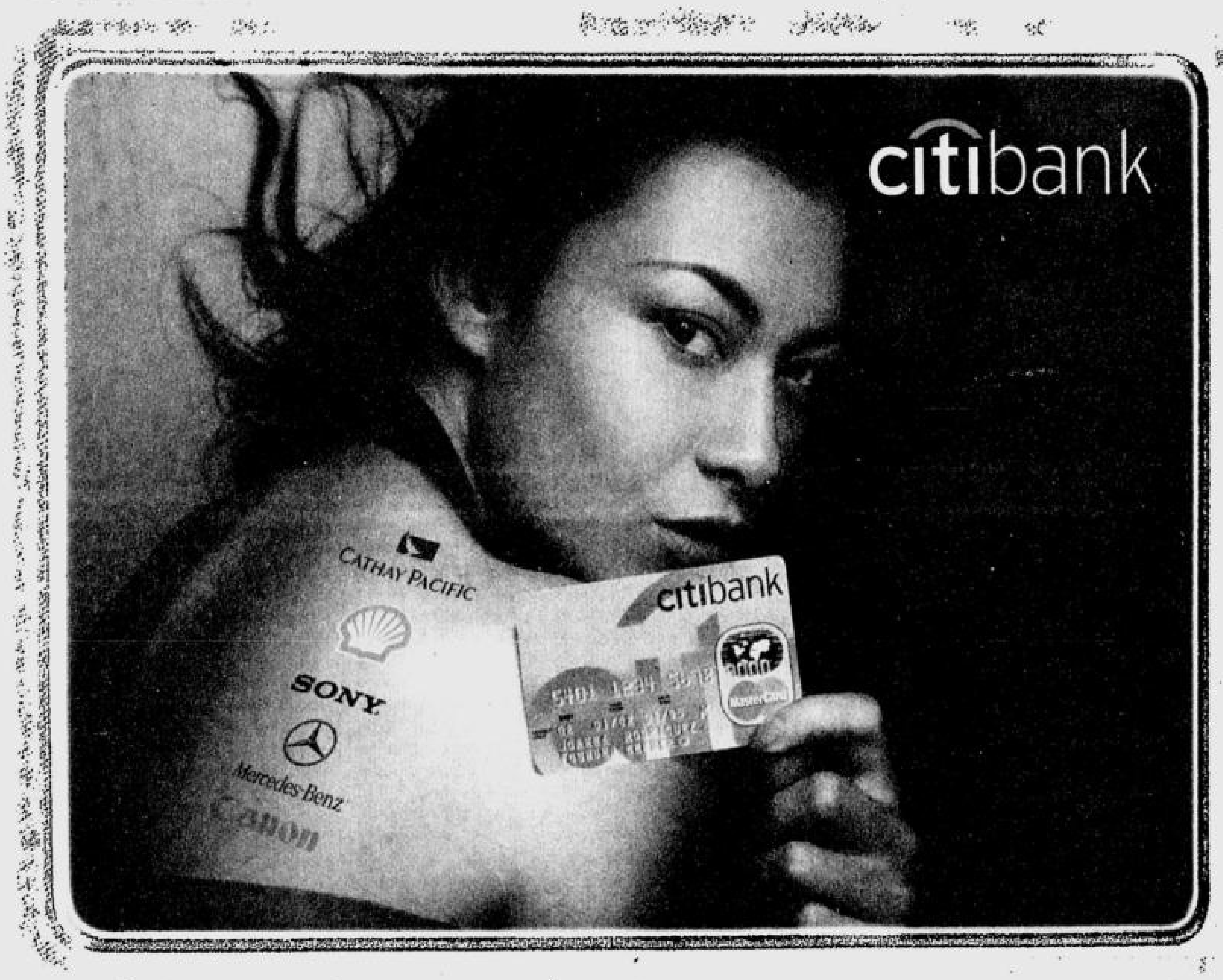

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Democratic substitution

EDITORIAL

IN ASKING the Presidential Electoral Tribunal that she be allowed to substitute for her deceased husband in his election protest against President Macapagal-Arroyo, Susan Roces shows her faith in the democratic process. Whatever the political implications of her decision to prosecute her husband's protest, she shows her faith in our democracy, a democracy that she thinks has been violated last May 10.

There may be legal questions about whether a case can be pursued even after the plaintiff has died. But this is the duty of the lawyers of President Macapagal-Arroyo to argue. They are expected to ask the tribunal to deny the petition. In bidding her lawyers to do so, the President is merely performing her role in the democratic process. She, too, is expected to give credence to the process. And to her credit, she has not reacted hysterically to Roces' petition, just as she did not immaturely respond last year to the opposition's bid to question the results of the election through the tribunal.

Despite her outburst on national television during Poe's wake last month, Roces has demonstrated considerable grace. She has refused to allow her husband's untimely death to be used as a political tool to harass the administration, however strong the temptation to do that, considering that her husband's iconic stature—and her own influential figure—could sway legions. She might have berated ABS-CBN for allegedly conducting a one-sided coverage of the election that supposedly cast her husband's campaign in a negative light, but she was sport enough to accept the apologies of Karen Davila, if indeed the news anchor had the authority to apologize on behalf of the network.

There may or may not be truth to the charge that Poe was robbed of victory, and that is why it is best that the conduct of the elections be subjected to inquiry by the tribunal. What is at stake is nothing less than the relevance and authenticity of our democracy.

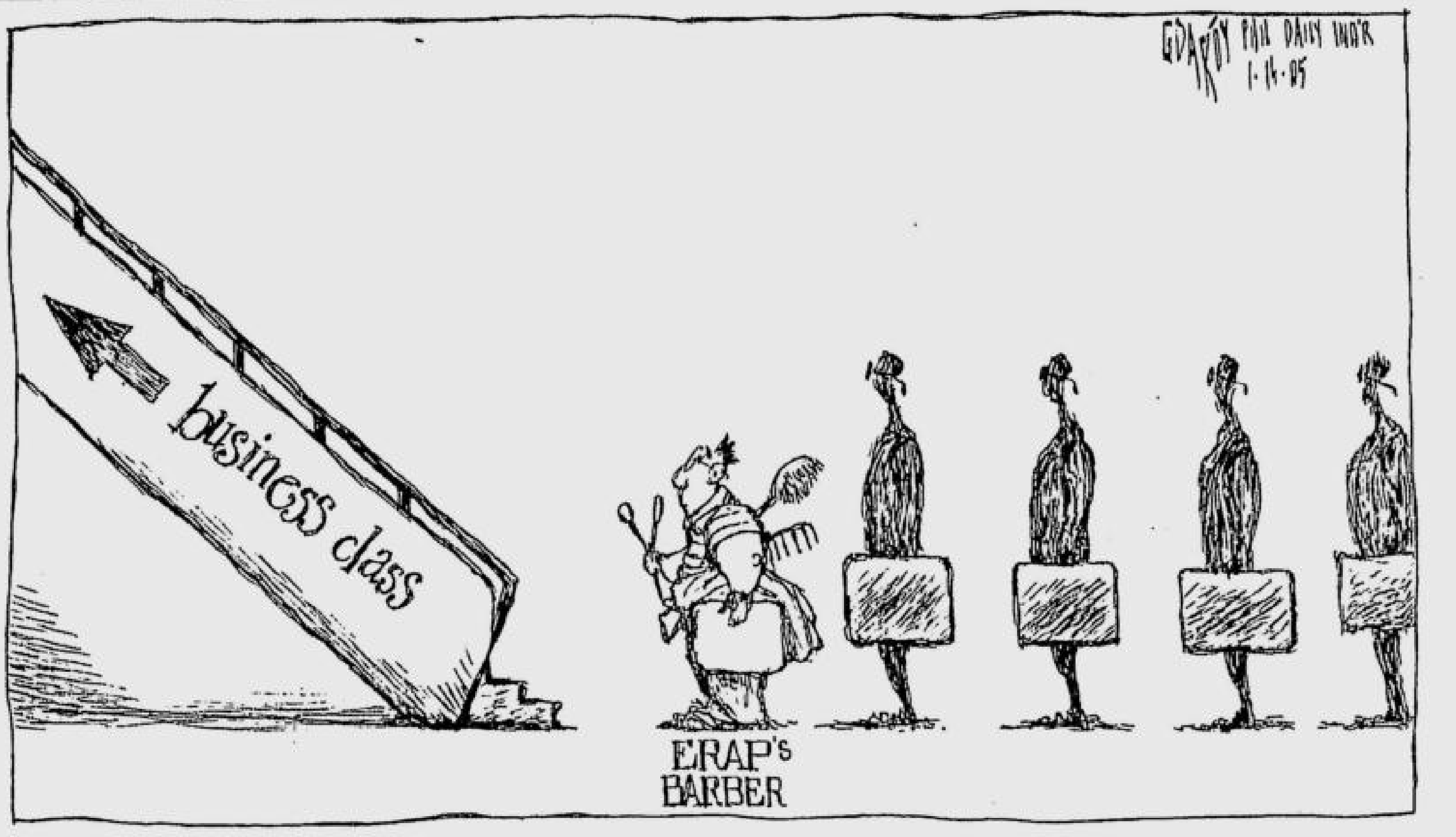
This is not to say that Ms Macapagal prostituted our democracy and cheated Poe of his victory. For all intents and purposes, the opposition might have cheated, too, since despite the administration behemoth, the opposition was also well-funded and had widespread support in the grass roots, particularly among local political bosses. Many of these bosses, like Makati Mayor Jejomar Binay and the Marcoses of Ilocos, are well entrenched and represent the worst of dynastic politics in the Philippines.

What we are saying is that the protest case may yet yield the truth and expose the canker in our democracy. At the very least, it may confirm widespread belief about the incompetence of the Commission on Elections in managing the electoral process. It is not the President who's cast under the glare of the spotlight in this protest; it's the Comelec.

It was the Comelec that failed to computerize the election because of partisan politicking of the commissioners, notably Luzviminda Tancangco. And even when it had purchased the technology to computerize the election, the Comelec was humiliated when the Supreme Court declared the contract null and void because of irregularities in the bidding.

The failure of the Comelec last May to stop the illegal posting of campaign bills, make transparent election spending by the candidates, stem electioneering and stop violence in election hotspots should have been a prelude to the lamentable manner it handled May 10 and afterwards. That Poe and the opposition questioned the result of the election was a slap in the face of the Comelec.

To be sure, the protest is also a slap in the face of our democracy. For far too long now, our election has been in the thrall of petty political bosses and of political dynasties that have made elective seats a family fiefdom, and of voters who will give their vote to the highest bidder. It is in the thrall of pre-modern attitudes that wouldn't want to modernize the election system and would seek to keep it in the primitive manual stage because it makes it easy to buy, bribe and cheat one's way to "victory." It is not farfetched to say the worst features of our democracy as experienced during elections can be seen both in the sitting power and the challenger. The failure of our democracy is a failure of both the administration and the opposition.



Atienza to GMA: Obey the law, decentralize

As I See It

Neal H. Cruz

MANILA Mayor Lito Atienza has an unsolicited advice to President Macapagal-Arroyo to save her all the aggravation brought on by the many problems besetting the nation: decentralize; obey the Local Government Code to the letter.

Atienza told the Kapihan sa Manila last Monday that the law mandates that local government units be given genuine autonomy, fiscal and otherwise. Let the local officials solve their problems. They're the people who know best what the problems and the priorities are. It is they who are on the spot.

Malacañang cannot know everything that is happening in all corners of the country. Neither can it act quickly enough to solve problems that suddenly erupt.

Malacañang is violating the law right and left, Atienza said. The most blatant is in the payment of the Internal Revenue Allotment (IRA). The law says local government units should get a percentage of BIR collections, based on population and area. The Supreme Court ruled that the release of the funds should be "automatic"—no need for negotiations. But the national government has repeatedly reduced the IRAs of the LGUs. It is still doing that in spite of the Supreme Court decision.

Control of the police is another case in point, Atienza said. Crime is on the rise and the police are inefficient because the police force is one monolithic body run by people in faraway Imperial Manila. All other countries have local police forces run by the local governments, Atienza said. In addition to the local police units, some have a national force that is the equivalent of America's National Guard or our old Constabulary.

We had the most efficient police when we had local police units run by the mayors separate from the Philippine Constabulary. That was why the Manila Police was called "Manila's Finest." It was one of the best police forces in the world at the time.

But we destroyed the arrangement when we formed a single national police force, the present Philippine National Police (PNP). Law and order has deteriorated since then, while corruption in the force has increased.

* * *

Multi-billionaire Lucio Tan pleaded not guilty when he was finally arraigned last week on charges of tax evasion. These cases have been in the courts for almost 12 years now—from the regional trial court all the way to the Supreme Court—but the government is not even an inch closer to getting even a peso of the alleged P25 billion that Tan allegedly failed to pay the Bureau of Internal Revenue.

The cases have been dismissed a couple of times already, but they were revived and have now reached the trial stage on orders of the Supreme Court.

Why are the cases taking such a long time? The prosecution says Tan is delaying them. But I think the real reason is that the BIR has no evidence to make the charges stick and the government is going through with the prosecution merely to show that it will not tolerate tax evasion.

If I remember right, the BIR, then headed by Liwayway Vinzons-Chato, filed the tax evasion case against Tan in 1993. Chato, who claimed she had "truckloads of evidence" to pin down Tan, failed to deliver even the shadow of one truck. Thus, when her contemporary in the Ramos administration, former Justice Secretary Silvestre Bello III, was being pressured to go after Tan, all the latter could say was that Chato's touted evidence was "grossly inadequate."

Far from the "truckloads" of evidence that Chato bragged about, Department of Justice sources said all that Bello got was a handful of folders as proof of Tan's multi-billion tax evasion case.

Seven or eight secretaries of justice later, the BIR case against Tan and 60 others have finally reached the trial stage. But like its first decision on the case, the Supreme Court maintains that Tan and his co-accused must be afforded the opportunity to examine the evidence against them.

At Tan's arraignment last week before Judge Alex Ruiz, his counsel Estelito Mendoza reiterated his client's request to be furnished copies of the evidence used as basis by the DOJ in filing the nine tax cases.

While government prosecutors have 15 days to comment on Mendoza's motion, they were preempted by their boss, Justice Secretary Raul Gonzalez, who admitted on air that original documents about Fortune Tobacco Corp.'s tax payments were missing. Gonzalez then ordered the BIR to produce these documents before the pre-trial starts on Feb. 18.

This mystery of the missing documents is making the people wonder if the BIR is serious about the cases or just wasting government funds and time to put on a show.

Mendoza has been asking—as a matter of right of any accused—for the evidence since 1993. Even the Supreme Court—in February 1997, or almost eight years ago—ordered the BIR to produce the documents supporting the complaints and give Tan and his co-accused time to examine them. If the BIR and the DOJ cannot produce the evidence, could it be that the BIR's withdrawal of Tan's tax case was right, after all?

Tan's camp is saying that the taipan is being "used and abused" as a convenient scapegoat and a smokescreen for the government's failure to collect the correct taxes because of corruption and gross incompetence in the BIR. Indeed, the tax case against Tan looks like outright persecution rather than legal prosecution.

Academic freedom is not absolute

Passion for Reason

Raul C. Pangalangan

ACADEMIC freedom, how many crimes have been committed in thy name?

Such cries were originally voiced against sins committed in the name of "liberty" during the Reign of Terror, following the French Revolution. Today a similar cry is heard against the reign of classroom "terrors."

I am bothered by over-expansive claims of academic freedom, fueled largely by the exuberance of democracy following Edsa 1. Courts today are too deferential to school decisions, and that deference is misplaced. They fail to distinguish between two kinds of freedoms: one, **institutional** academic freedom enjoyed by the school against the state, and two, **individual** academic freedom enjoyed by professors against everyone else.

The 1987 Constitution eroded institutional powers but fortified individual freedom. Let me show you how.

First, that famous definition of academic freedom—the "four essential freedoms of a university" to determine for itself on academic grounds who may teach (faculty appointment), what may be taught (curriculum), how it shall be taught (teaching method), and who may be admitted to study (student admission)—comes from a separate opinion by Felix Frankfurter in the leading US case, Sweezy v. New Hampshire. That enumeration wasn't the "controlling doctrine" in that decision—it was superfluous commentary, or mere "dictum," as lawyers say. The court was protecting not the **institutional** freedom of schools but the **individual** freedom of a Marxist professor blacklisted in the McCarthyist witch hunt of the 1950s and who refused to testify before a "loyalty" hearing to ferret out "subversives."

The majority opinion upheld Sweezy: "Scholarship cannot flourish in an atmosphere of suspicion and distrust. Teachers and students must always remain free to inquire, to study and to evaluate, to gain new maturity and understanding; otherwise, our civilization will stagnate and die." They saw **individual** academic freedom as an extension of the First Amendment right to free speech. They were not concerned with **institutional** freedom.

Second, how did that errant Sweezy enumeration find its way into Philippine law? When it was cited in the masterful opinion by Justice Enrique Fernando in Garcia v. Loyola School of Theology—again purely as dictum. The school had turned away a student who wanted to re-enroll, saying her questions in class were "not always pertinent and had the effect of slowing down the progress of the class." The core of Fernando's argument was on whether the school can be ordered to admit a student; a "writ of mandamus" required a "clear legal right" to admission and, alas, the student hadn't been formally admitted but had been merely allowed to attend some courses.

Third, should the courts defer to all decisions by schools? A categorical "no." The 1987 Constitution shifted the focus away from **institutional** toward **individual** academic freedom. The old Constitution said: "Academic freedom shall be enjoyed by all institutions of higher learning," but the 1987 Constitution says, "Academic freedom shall be enjoyed in all institutions of higher learning." Commissioner Adolf Azcuna, now Supreme Court justice, authored this clause deliberately to expand the claimants of academic freedom so that not only schools but teachers and students as well can assert it.

Sure it may take a Sherlock Holmes to detect the change from "enjoyed by" to "enjoyed in." But it shouldn't take an Oliver Wendell Holmes Jr. to say that a two-letter word can radically change the law. (And I leave it to psychologist Margarita Holmes to venture what "impertinent" questions the student asked of Loyola's venerables.) In Loyola, Fernando already read into the 1973 Charter Dean Vicente Sinco's distinction between "the autonomy of the university as a corporate body, and the freedom of the individual university teacher." But until then students' rights were recognized only in dissent by Justice Felix Makasiar: "It is not the happiness and self-fulfillment of the professor alone that are guaranteed [by academic freedom but] the curious intellect of the student [as well]."

So when should a court wash its hands and when should it review a decision? How do we draw the line? Simple: by applying the same test used by the Supreme Court when called upon to review discretionary acts by the political branches, namely: are there "judicially discoverable and manageable standards" by which to carry out its review? That was the standard used by the Court when it inquired into the validity of the act of Congress impeaching the Chief Justice in Francisco v. House of Representatives. Why retreat from that doctrine simply because a decision is called "academic" (while in Francisco they were called "political"), if objective standards of review are available just the same?

The moment a decision is "fenced about" by rules, that decision is no longer impervious to judicial review. The Sweezy enumeration itself limits its protection solely to decisions made "on academic grounds," not those that are based on fixed rules. The Constitution itself requires the courts to exercise judicial power when "due and demandable rights" are violated. The mere fact that a decision is made by a school does not automatically make it an "academic decision." In order to enjoy judicial deference, the decision must involve "unbounded discretion," one that can be reviewed only by inquiring into the wisdom rather than the validity of a decision.

Max Ehrmann said: "I journeyed from university to university, and I saw … the earth and sky explained, and the habits of body, Everywhere chairs of this and that, largely endowed, But nowhere saw I a chair of the human heart."

* * *

Comments to raul.pangalangan@up.edu.ph

Charges of bias

ANALYSIS

Amando Doronila

THE OTHER day, an ABS-CBN van, housing a mobile TV studio, went up in flames after a group of six armed men attacked the parked vehicle along Shaw Boulevard in Mandaluyong City and exploded a petrol bomb. No one was hurt in the incident. A group calling itself "K", claimed responsibility and left a statement accusing ABS-CBN of "suppressing the truth" in its coverage of the May presidential election and the media of allowing themselves to be used to "belittle and trample upon the dignity of the leader who is the hope of the masses."

The ABS-CBN management was quick to conclude that the bombing "appeared to be a well-planned operation which specifically targeted the media." In a play for public sympathy, the management issued a mock-heroic statement declaring that "it will not be deterred and will remain committed to our duty in the service of the Filipino."

An equally infantile reaction was the insinuation linking Fernando Poe Jr.'s supporters to the attack. There are a number of more compelling reasons than alleged bias in its coverage of the last elections that make ABS-CBN a convenient target of retaliatory attacks: there are a number of obnoxious media celebrities in its staff, whose swollen egos can trigger a wave of assaults without being prodded by grievances nursed by the perception of Poe's fans and his widow Susan Roces that his failed presidential campaign "did not get a fair shake from ABS-CBN."

The other problem of ABS-CBN is that it is a media giant and an important political player which, over the years, has nurtured a stable of celebrities who have ceased to remain as showbiz personalities and have parlayed their popularity to become politicians, getting themselves elected as senators and vice president of the republic. ABS-CBN is paying the price of bigness; the big guys always attract flak.

And so, supporters of Poe should be left out of the search for someone to blame for the ABS-CBN van attack. Let Poe rest in peace. And please, let's stop dragging Roces into the post-Poe political era either as a replacement for her husband to push his electoral protest before the Presidential Electoral Tribunal or as leader of the opposition through a massive signature campaign. The opposition has more than enough talented and experienced politicians within its ranks to provide inspiration and policies and programs that can offer a viable alternative to those spelled out by President Macapagal-Arroyo, which have already become stale less than six months after she began her elected term.

On the issue of the alleged "bias" of ABS-CBN's election coverage, Roces was specific in pointing out that its cameras "would not pan into the size of the crowd," during Poe's campaign rallies and "constricted the shots to make it appear that the crowd was not that big." This observation is accurate, but it ignores the fact that media focus is a function of the requirements of TV.

Roces and those who agree with her define bias according to their own standards of fairness and the political advantages they derive from the coverage. They forget that the Poe campaign was built on the crowd attendance in his rallies. Focus on the crowd was critically important to the campaign which emphasized creating the perception, let alone, the illusion, that he was a sure winner on the basis of the much larger crowds his rallies were drawing than those of the Arroyo campaign. Mammoth crowds were important to drive a bandwagon effect for the Poe campaign. Without crowd psychology, there was hardly anything going for the campaign. TV could not keep on covering the campaign focusing all the time on the crowd, without becoming boring and panning the cameras on more of the same.

TV coverage is not all about crowds. More than that, it is also about ideas and human interest, about incidents that break the humdrum of repetitive speech-making during rallies such as the more attention-grabbing incidents like spats on stage between an irritable Poe and TV reporters who reported his gaffes.

ABS-CBN riled the Poe camp not because it was biased, but because it did not play into the hands of the Poe supporters who wanted it to be its political propaganda organ by making its cameras focus exclusively on the crowd. The Poe campaign had no patience with ideas. Somehow, TV also had to vary its menu. It could neglect debates and ideas in the form of what presidential candidates had to offer in terms of competing programs and policies. The Poe campaign has only itself to blame for a strategy that depended for its success on crowd psychology for bandwagon effect and that dismissed the importance of public debate on competing programs and policies.

By contrast, the administration's campaign recognized it could not compete with the Poe campaign in terms of crowd size, and so it was tailored to emphasize ideas and focused on small meetings. The Poe campaign dug its own grave by shunning dialogue with the public and by deluding itself that it was the crowd—not ideas—that really mattered in a presidential campaign.

The complaints about biased coverage are falling on TV and not on the newspapers, because TV is a visual medium and its emphasis and fairness are easily measured by what it focuses on. On the other hand, newspapers are less oriented toward visuals. Although they do like to have color on their pages and also show large crowds, they provide more space for ideas. Thus, the accusations of bias by ABS-CBN are a false issue. They really boil down to the fact that the network did not allow itself to be used as a tool to promote the political advantage of one of the protagonists in a fiercely contested election.

Unpresidential Erap

AT LARGE

Rina Jimenez-David

A LADY radio commentator wanted to know why former President Joseph Estrada arrived in Hong Kong clad only in a denim jacket and jeans, and a checkered cotton shirt. The look, she implied, seemed fit for one of the ruffians that Erap used to portray onscreen rather than a former head of state.

Erap replied that he had wanted to change into more formal wear but he wasn't allowed to pass by his family home in Greenhills, and so he was "forced" to travel to Hong Kong only in the clothes that were available in his Taytay rest house.

But it seems that it would take more than a spiffy suit to make Mr. Estrada "presidential." Certainly, his remark that the burning of the OB van owned by broadcast giant ABS-CBN should serve as a warning to media organizations "engaged in biased reporting" is not only not presidential, but irresponsible and dangerous, too.

Is the ousted president supporting, by implication, the torching of media facilities by people who happen to disagree with the opinions expressed by employees of a media establishment, or with the manner in which they cover the news? Malacañang is right, at least in this instance. The attack on the ABS-CBN remote coverage facility is part of the general campaign of intimidation and suppression of our supposedly "free" media. It finds its crudest and most extreme expression in the murder of journalists, but burning vehicles and officially sponsored advertisers' boycotts are also arms in the arsenal of those who would bend media to their will.

Our Constitution protects freedom of the press, recognizing how a free press serves the ends of democracy by helping create an informed citizenry and serving as a check to abusive government. So when the press comes under attack, democracy is attacked, too.

* * *

INSTEAD of expressing concern or appealing to the alleged FPJ followers who claimed responsibility for the attacks, Estrada chose to fan the flames of discord. When FPJ's widow Susan Roces castigated ABS-CBN reporter Karen Davila for what she claimed was the network's "mistreatment" of her and her late husband in the recent presidential campaign, many were aware that hers weren't isolated sentiments. "Tita Swanie" was merely echoing the feelings of most, if not all, opposition supporters. This, even if an independent content analysis of the media coverage of the last elections showed that there were more news reports about Fernando Poe Jr. than any other presidential candidate, including the incumbent Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo.

I'm sure the destruction of an OB van was not what Roces intended when she let loose with her "real" feelings about the local media. Her husband's followers have also been quick to distance themselves and their organizations from this act of vandalism. Rez Cortez, a movie actor and organizer for FPJ, even speculated that "other parties" may have wanted to widen the gap between them and the media.

But all their denials and diplomatese have been rendered useless by Erap's latest unpresidential pronouncement. He sounds like he's even condoning what those hooligans did. And by going on about how the media are "abusing" their powers, he even seems to be encouraging copycat attacks. *Nanggagatong pa.*

* * *

QUERIED about speculations on how he and the Arroyo government have arrived at an "accommodation," Erap replied: "If we have really arrived at a compromise, do you think I would be talking this way?"

Well, from the looks of it, Erap does seem to be enjoying extraordinarily special treatment, if not from Malacañang, then from the Sandiganbayan. When he complains about how he has to beg for favors at every turn, he sounds more like a churlish ingrate than a statesman enduring the hardships of imprisonment out of principle.

Filipino doctors had long been saying that the knee operation that Estrada underwent in Hong Kong could have been performed by Filipino specialists in a Philippine hospital. That he was allowed to travel to Hong Kong (he wanted to go to the United States) already constituted a huge favor. And how does he receive his good fortune? By abusing the trust of the court and leaving his hospital room to live it up in a deluxe resort-hotel!

Not only should Estrada be returned to the country posthaste, he should be punished for his misbehavior by being removed from his "rest house arrest" and placed in a real penitentiary. Okay, if he needs physical therapy for his knees, the Veterans Memorial Medical Center will do for now. But it's time we put an end to this travesty of a long-extended trial and comfy detention. How can we teach our people that "crime does not pay" otherwise?

* * *

THE LOVE of luxury, the need to live it high on the hog, that has always been Erap's weakness.

If you remember, he began his presidential term by plunging into major and costly renovation projects, from the Malacañang Guest House to the presidential yacht. And his three years in the presidency was marked by daily bacchanals that featured groaning buffet tables and "*pa-morningan*" drinking sessions at the presidential residence.

Such a stupendous lifestyle demanded high financing, of course, and so Erap stumbled into his Waterloo, the *jueteng* scandal. If love of money is the root of all evil, then love of the good life is the earth upon which corruption thrives.

Despite his years of detention, Erap hasn't learned any lessons, it seems. I think there wouldn't have been too much of a fuss raised about Erap's Hong Kong treatment if he had been circumspect and kept within the bounds of the Sandiganbayan's orders. But Estrada obviously believes he shouldn't be made to suffer the fate of ordinary mortals and that he deserves no less than the highest standards of living. The government should respond in kind and subject him to the strictest standards of detention.

The Prince of Luzon

LOOKING BACK

Ambeth R. Ocampo

IN SOME old textbooks, Pedro Alejandro Paterno is included in the roster (some would rather call it a Pantheon) of heroes because he is credited with the Pact of Biak-na-Bato in 1897. As you will recall, the Philippine Revolution against Spain erupted in 1896 and, after a year of fighting, we were about to win. Enter Paterno who told the Spaniards that he could arrange a ceasefire. He talked to the Filipinos and told them that the country needed peace. To cut a long story short, Emilio Aguinaldo and many of the revolutionary leaders left on a steamer from the port of Sual, Pangasinan, for Hong Kong. Fighting stopped temporarily, prompting one historian to call Paterno a "peacemaker."

In more recent times, however, Paterno has been studied anew and at least on my personal list of Philippine heroes, his name does not appear. Yet, I cannot seem to put him on my list of Philippine villains because his eccentricities make him interesting. For his services to the Spanish crown, for instance, he demanded a reward. He wanted to be declared a Grand Duke of Spain. After all, he was already the self-proclaimed "Prince of Luzon" who traced his ancestry all the way down to pre-colonial Tagalog nobility. A reward from the Filipino side came when he became president of the Malolos Congress.

In the correspondence of Rizal, we get to know about the parties Paterno threw in Madrid as well as the assortment of curios that he passed off as a museum in his home. Paterno even displayed a coat of arms on his carriage and other personal articles that was distinguished by a pair of carabao horns.

Our Prince of Luzon even had court costume. Photographs show him in a white robe, holding a staff topped with ostrich feathers.

It is from Paterno's imagination that the pomp and circumstance of the Malolos government drew its inspiration. There is a photograph of Aguinaldo seated in the center of Barasoain Church surrounded by generals in military uniform and the members of the Malolos Congress in their top hats and black coats. It is a fascinating photograph. There are no pews to block the view, everyone stands by the sides of the church, and there on a long table of Philippine hardwood are the leaders of government. Anahaw leaves and Philippine flags adorn the posts of the church and the backdrop for this grand scene, that today looks like polka dots, is actually a crude attempt to simulate ermine—yet another mark of royalty.

Paterno was also behind the great Malolos banquet of September 1898 that was the highlight of the day the Congress ratified the Declaration of Independence made in Kawit, Cavite, on June 12, 1898. As I have written a detailed account of this great party before, I won't repeat it here except to note that it was so impressive that Nick Joaquin declared that the Malolos menu should stand side by side with the Malolos Congress as a marker of Philippine progress. These printed documents, at least for Joaquin, constitute tangible proof that our nation had come of age.

Paterno was probably responsible for the ceremonial that marked the opening of the Malolos Congress, which was opposed by Apolinario Mabini who insisted that Aguinaldo remain a "dictator" to bring the struggle for independence to its logical conclusion. In Mabini's view, a dictator was needed during a war to make quick decisions without being hobbled by a Congress that could be convened when peace and stability have been established.

Aguinaldo is shown in a number of photographs outside Barasoain Church, seated in a grand carriage surrounded by mounted bodyguards in gala uniforms. He wears a top hat and carries an elaborate cane topped with ivory and gold. Liveried footmen in coats and powdered wigs complete the cast, making me once sigh and admit that at one time the presidency had real class. But then, to my great disappointment, I discovered that this elegant black carriage with footmen was borrowed from, hold your breath, the neighborhood *funeraria*! Aguinaldo had arrived in Barasoain in a hearse.

In retrospect, the opening of the Malolos Congress marked the end of the Revolution. Aguinaldo did not finish his term—and one could say the same thing of Joseph Estrada who had the bright idea of having his inaugural in Barasoain. I'm sure that no superstitious president in the future will make the same mistake. With these two as precedent, inaugurals will always be held at the Quirino Grandstand in Rizal Park.

How come people tolerated the Prince of Luzon? Maybe they didn't know any better and were impressed by his flights of fancy. Perhaps he reflected a lot of glory from young expatriate students who once enjoyed the hospitality of his Madrid home, among them Jose Rizal. Because of *utang na loob,* Paterno was spared death at the hands of Paciano Rizal when he was en route to Biak-na-Bato. Paciano told Paterno that he did not want peace and wanted the struggle to continue until Spain was banished from the Philippines. Paciano admitted that he would have killed the peace negotiator if not for his earlier kindness to his younger brother Jose.

All the details and even conversation are recorded in Paterno's book "El Pacto de Biyak-na-Bato."

During the American period, Paterno tried unsuccessfully to win Governor General Taft's favor. By then his parties had lost their sheen, and the Prince of Luzon faded away.

* * *

Comments are welcome at aocampo@ateneo.edu

A culture of savings

PINOY KASI

Michael L. Tan

SOME of you may have caught the "Probe" special on Channel 5 last week entitled "Pera," focusing on Filipino problems with financial management at the individual and household levels. One of the most dramatic examples featured in the documentary was a man working as a messenger with a monthly salary of about P7,800 who had run up P80,000 in credit card debts.

On a national level, the Philippines was described as having one of the lowest savings rate in the world. In economic development terms, this means that we have very limited financial resources going into new investments that can move the country forward.

I was interviewed for that "Probe" documentary, and I shared several insights on why we have this problem, which I thought of recapping in today's column, together with some additional insights.

Nothing to save?

The usual answer to why we save so little is that, given the level of poverty in the country, most households have nothing to save. So many of our people live hand-to-mouth, their earnings not even enough to cover basic expenses.

And yet, people will point out, too, that those with very low incomes still spend on non-essential items, like buying a DVD player and TV set, or cigarettes and alcohol, or as in the case of the messenger featured in the special, P20,000 for a party to celebrate his child's first birthday!

How do we explain this? That's where we get a host of other explanations, many of which cluster around the "culture of poverty" thesis. One variation on this thesis is that when you're poor, you live for today. Without hope of a better future, you spend whatever comes your way.

One of my friends calls this the "one day millionaire" syndrome. I've seen it so many times, the most heartbreaking examples coming with many of our overseas workers, especially those who come home after working as entertainers in Japan. They come home with lots of dollars and yen, check the whole family into a four- or five-star hotel, host several parties and, of course, give away all kinds of *pasalubong* (gifts), and in a few weeks, all there earnings are gone.

Sharing our blessings?

Ironically, such behavior may actually come from our norm of sharing good fortune. Even the idea of the *pasalubong*, gifts you bring back from a trip, is a way of sharing your blessings. I recently had some debates with relatives over the lavish parties thrown for a one-year-old child and the explanation is that a child is God's blessing and we need to celebrate and share this blessing by hosting a grand affair.

I don't buy that argument completely. We all know these birthday parties are often intended more for the adults than for the child, a way of building alliances. In fact, lavish parties are the general norm, for children and for adults, and these are done more for social reasons than for anything else. We host the parties to build business and social links.

There's also something tribal in all this. In many societies, there is the "big man syndrome": a tribal leader is expected to sponsor big feasts from time to time as a way of redistributing his wealth as well as asserting his authority and influence. As cultural practices go, the "big man" and the elite get imitated by the lower strata of society and in the end, you have even the poor trying to outdo each other with extravagance. I've heard it time and time again, the concern that neighbors will talk if you hold too small a baptismal party for Junior.

Conspicuous consumption

The "big man feast" is only one of several historical hindrances that work against an ethic of saving in the Philippines. The fiesta was actually a modification of "big man feast," this time a community effort to show off a town's wealth. In the social sciences, we call this conspicuous consumption.

I've also wondered about the post-World War II era contributing to all this conspicuous consumption. Because we were wealthier that many other countries in the region, we were busy flying off to Hong Kong on weekends, holding lavish parties where champagne flowed from fountains (I am not kidding here), in other words, grand opulence. Other countries, in contrast, launched austerity campaigns, urging citizens to save and to patronize local products. We laughed at them, boasting of our imported goods.

Now, of course, those countries that practiced austerity are importing Filipinos to work for them and, in turn, our Filipino overseas workers spend their hard-earned money to buy other countries' goods.

We are now at an added disadvantage because not only did we skip an era of austerity, we leapfrogged into this 21st century of massive consumerism. We are told "Buy! Buy! Buy!" and we are flooded with all kinds of goods, including fairly cheap ones with which to tempt the lower classes, from cell phones to DVD players. We also have liberal credit card policies, which allow even messengers to get one, and to rapidly rack up debts.

Reversing the trend

It's a dangerous situation we're in, and we better start thinking of strategies at home, in schools and in offices, to create what the Asian Development Bank calls a "culture of savings." (The ADB had a study noting how our overseas workers tend to spend their money on other countries' goods rather than plowing the money back into the Philippines for economic and social development.)

We have to start especially with children, the current crop being a generation exposed to a bewildering variety of consumer goods—and advertising to push those goods. Schools can incorporate budgetary management into math classes. And we really should include credit card management in our college courses.

There's much we can do at home, with those children's parties, for example. I have nothing against celebrating birthdays, but let's reinvent these parties. My godchildren, Tess and Dennis Batangan, give birthday parties for their children but tell friends to bring toys to donate to indigent children.

When one of Doctors Delen and Boying de la Paz's sons asks why they can't get a newer cell phone model, they remind the kids: a cell phone is for communicating, do you really need the camera and the MP3 player?

Another couple working with me at UP, Zen and Leo Quintilla, tells their son that instead of spending for some non-essential item, they're putting the money into his educational plan, preparing for college.

Last Christmas, many offices canceled their Christmas parties and donated the money instead to disaster relief. These are encouraging signs that we can build a culture of savings, linked as other important social values: compassion, foresight, mutual help.

We better move fast. Already I see dangerous new cultural beliefs emerging. On the "Probe" documentary, the messenger said he doesn't save because there's a belief now that by doing so, you actually invite financial emergencies like illnesses! The distorted reasoning: don't save, and you won't have the emergencies.

A national consensus

THE LETTERS to the editor criticizing the Philippine Mining Act of 1995 and the Supreme Court decision conveniently gloss over the following facts.

After many months of discussion—which studied with a fine tooth-comb practically all the issues raised by your letter-writers—152 out of the 215 members of the 9th Congress voted for it. Some 63 were absent in the voting—–including 20 who were co-authors of the act.

Not a single congressman voted against it. No congressman abstained.

Practically the same thing happened in the Senate. Nineteen senators voted for the Mining Act. No one abstained. Only one senator voted against it, then Sen. Ernesto Maceda.

There has been no move in Congress since then to amend it, much less to rescind it.

President Macapagal-Arroyo has adopted as her administration's policy the development of the country's vast mineral resources through responsible mining, as one engine to develop the economy and fight poverty.

Not one single Cabinet member, past or present, disagreed with such a policy. Economic Planning Secretary Romulo Neri has long been a champion for the development of the mining industry. Representatives of the business sector have all hailed the Mining Act.

After nearly a year of deliberations, the Supreme Court last December upheld the constitutionality of the Mining Act, by a vote of 10 to 4, with one justice abstaining.

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER LETTERS

Rarely has there been such a strong consensus among the representatives of the nation—the executive, legislative and judicial branches—for a national economic policy.

Contrast that to the opposition against such a national policy. The petitioners in the Supreme Court seeking to declare the Mining Act unconstitutional consist mainly of the La Bugal-B'laan Tribal Association, and 11 NGOs, such as Green Forum, Kaisahan, PARRDS, CADI, UDI, Saligan and PhilDHRRA.

If that tribal association is truly representative of the B'laan, we respect their decision not to allow mining in their ancestral domains in Davao del Sur. Indeed, the Mining Act requires the consent of indigenous peoples in the area before any exploration permit can be given.

The NGOs which petitioned the Supreme Court against the Mining Act, on the other hand, appear to base their stand more on ideological black-and-white grounds, not on a rational assessment of the beneficial role a modernized, ecology-conscious mining industry can play in our economy as it has in Australia and Canada.

—RIGOBERTO D. TIGLAO,
secretary and head,
Presidential Management Staff,
Office of the President,
Malacañang, Manila

RP has more to offer than beautiful beaches

I AM a senior Filipino citizen who has seen much of the beautiful Philippine countryside and who enjoys relating with the rural folks. Hence, I am challenged to promote in-bound tourism among well-meaning foreign tourists in search of a "tropical paradise."

On the other hand, promoting the Philippines as "The Ideal Resort Destination Alternative" (in the context of the misfortune that some of our Asian neighbors just went through) is not only being insensitive but also very bad timing. How could foreign tourists be enticed to come to the "Philippines—the Island Resort" when the tsunami danger (so fresh in the world's consciousness) could likewise happen in our very own country?

Surely, our experts at our Department of Tourism must have something better to offer other than our beautiful beaches.

—ERNESTO C. DEL CASTILLO,
manilaman@edsamail.com.ph

On Estrada's leaving his Hong Kong hospital

VOICES ON INQ7.NET

I DON'T understand why the media are so interested in questioning everything that former President Joseph Estrada does, now that he is in Hong Kong recuperating from his surgery.

His lawyers are right, because confinement in a hospital is for when you are sick and recovering. It appears that he is now fully recovered and can go out wherever he wants to go as long as his police escorts are with him at all times.

Sen. Jose "Jinggoy" Estrada said the former president was offered exile by the Arroyo administration but he declined. Now that he is in Hong Kong, let him be.

Lubayan na ninyo ang pag atake sa kanya dahil wala naman kayong magagawa. Sumasama na lang ang loob ninyo (Stop your attacks because there is really nothing you can do about it. You will only feel bitter about it)!

As to his barber, so what if he went to Hong Kong? *Mayroon naman siyang* passport *at pinayagan naman siyang lumabas ng* Bureau of Immigration. *Bakit ngayon kinukwestiyon ninyo? Wala ba siyang karapatang mamasyal? Baka nagkataon lang na nandoon siya sa* Hong Kong *at naisipan niyang bisitahin si* Erap *at pagkatapos ginupitan siya—bawal ba 'yon? Tigilan na ninyo ang paguusisa sa dating pangulong* Estrada*—wala kayong karapatan!*—**Esmeraldo Deang Cato, 39-16 54th St., 2 Woodside, NY 11377, via e-mail**

* * *

Bravo INQUIRER. *Magaling kayo mag-*headline *pag tungkol sa* opposition; *pinapatay niyo naman pag tungkol kay* Gloria Macapagal-Aroryo.

During the Estrada presidency, *tsismis lang* headline *na sa inyo* with the collaboration of the Philippine Center for Investigative Journalism. Our country is going to the dogs and you were and are part of it. *Alisin ninyo ang* "balanced" *sa* front page *ninyo. Hindi totoo 'yun.*—**Flor Rivera, Caloocan City, via e-mail**

* * *

Estrada is claiming that he cannot afford to go for his knee surgery in Hong Kong, saying he has no money. But how on earth can he afford a HK$70,000 per month stay in a posh hotel in Hong Kong and even host dinners for the former members of his Cabinet? Flying his barber to Hong Kong is even absurd. *Kalokohan na 'to.*—**Audie Caslangen, 7 Bassien Rd., 02-04 Pastoral View Apt., Singapore 309837, via e-mail**

* * *

What else is new? Do other prisoners get to host a party? Hah! It's too bad the Philippines still has the same corrupt government I left. Wanna bet? He won't be going back to the Philippines.... Let's wait and see...—**Helen Martin, Richmond, British Columbia, Canada, via e-mail**

* * *

To my dearest so-called government: How stupid can you get? Estrada is making a mockery not only of you but also of the entire Filipino nation and you're still defending him.

And to all his supporters: I can only weep for you. This is the man that you would want to lead you out of poverty. Wise up, people. Jose Rizal and all of our heroes are turning in their graves right now. God bless you all.—**Ted Oniate, West Chester Ohio USA, vie e-mail**

* * *

What a decent way to flaunt his so-called dollars and sense all over Hong Kong at this time of the year. Indeed, when people back home are in need of the barest necessities of life, here come Estrada and his buddies, displaying with gusto so much money and time for a get-together!—**Manny Guinto, 27-4 Mueller Place, Tregear 2770, NSW, Australia, via e-mail**

* * *

What can we do with an ex-president who does not respect the law, does not respect the court, and bends laws and rules to suit his whims? And what can we do with a diseased judicial system?—**Jose Orozco, Calamba, Laguna, via e-mail**

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INQBOX

Question of the Week

Did government act properly in handling the outbreak of meningococcemia in Baguio City?

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Gov't 'double-talk' on graft denounced

By Yolanda Sotelo-Fuertes
PDI Northern Luzon Bureau

DAGUPAN CITY—Lingayen-Dagupan Archbishop Oscar Cruz rebuked the government for "proudly" announcing its resolve to get rid of corruption in the country while failing to lift a finger stop both legal and illegal gambling that, he said, are the "sources of corruption."

Cruz said the government "has done nothing really substantial to stop *jueteng* which is a source of big corruption."

"Neither has it even considered dissolving the Philippine Amusement and Gaming Corp. (Pagcor) as a part of a socio-moral change in the country," he said in a statement.

He called this posture of the government as "duplicity."

"The government has (been saying) one thing yet does something else. It proposes something yet does nothing about it," he said.

Cruz, national chair of the Krusada ng Bayan Laban sa Jueteng (National Crusade Against Jueteng), has been waging a war against gambling in the country, specifically the numbers game *jueteng*.

"Repeatedly, the government proudly announced its resolve to get rid of corruption in the country. Recently, the government loudly claimed it was time for a change. Yes it has done nothing really substantial to stop *jueteng*," Cruz said.

He also asked the government why it wanted to extend the "corporate gambling life" of Pagcor.

Cruz said both *jueteng* and corporate gambling are sources of "big corruption."

"Pagcor is like a disease so much unwelcome by communities aware of the social evils it brings. More recently, there was Binondo that drove it away. Before that, there was Baguio that stopped its attempted incursion. The same (thing) happened in other places," he said.

Cruz said: "*Jueteng* . . . has to buy the protection of police officials; it has to buy the tolerance of public authorities. That is why if it is neither tolerated nor protected, there is no organized *jueteng* in (any) place."

He said Pagcor and *jueteng* had a "cloak-and-dagger component" and both are "accompanied by shadowy characters and fatal by-products."

"Gambling is an activity that brings shame, creates troubles, causes problems. The truth is it is a dangerous reality that comes in a dreadful 3-G tripod: Gambling, guns, goons," the archbishop said.

New meningo case fails to dampen Baguio

By Frank Cimatu
PDI Northern Luzon Bureau

BAGUIO CITY—Another case of meningococcemia reported in nearby Itogon, Benguet, failed to dampen the "victory" parade of Baguio residents and officials held on Thursday to proclaim that the city is safe from the dreaded disease.

"We may say that the cases of meningococcemia had peaked in the first week of January and if this goes on until Jan. 17, we may lower the meningococcemia alert," Health Secretary Manuel Dayrit told reporters in a briefing on Thursday.

Dayrit said the disease has a maximum incubation period of 10 days. He said there had been no meningococcemia case recorded in Baguio in the past five days.

Dr. Marlon Niñal of the DOH's National Epidemiological Center (NEC) said the new confirmed meningococcemia victim is a 21-year-old man.

The man is confined at the Baguio General Hospital and Medical Center. Niñal said the meningococcemia-causing bacteria, Neisseria meningitidis, was found in the cerebrospinal fluid of the patient.

Dayrit said the DOH has already sent an epidemiological team to Itogon, about 15 km from Baguio, to do contact tracing and give chemoprophylaxis or antibiotics to the victim's close contacts.

Niñal, however, said their information showed that the Itogon victim is a car wash boy who might have worked in Baguio City. The man is the seventh meningococcemia victim in Benguet.

Dayrit, however, is unfazed.

"I will go to the city market and buy vegetables to show you that it is safe there," he said.

On Dec. 27 last year, Dayrit said the Baguio City market was the primary source of the series of cases of meningococcemia in the city.

Since then, local government and health officials have cleaned up and disinfected the market and given antibiotics to vendors and jeepney drivers in the market.

It is not known if the NEC's disclosure of the new victim would affect the DOH advisory on the meningococcemia alert in Baguio.

Dayrit said there have been no new cases in Mt. Province since Jan. 6. Two infants, both less than a year old, died to apparent meningococcemia last week but laboratory tests were still being done to confirm this, he said.

The risk of a Baguio resident contracting this fatal strain meningococcal disease has lessened from the previous 1 in 100,000 to 1 in 500,000, Dayrit said.

He said the previous fatality rate of 50 percent for Baguio had gone down to 40 to 30 percent.

Baguio officials led the parade that started at 3 p.m. About 250 foreign students wore shirts bearing the message: "I am from Baguio City. Do you have a problem with that?"

PLDT complains of theft of wires

ROXAS CITY—The Philippine Long Distance Telephone (PLDT) here has threatened to stop operating in Capiz if the police fail to stop the rampant stealing of their telephone wires.

Edgardo Beloria, PLDT manager in Roxas, relayed the warning to Gov. Vicente Bermejo and Senior Supt. Norlito Bautista, Capiz police director, during the meeting on Monday.

He said his company might no longer continue its services here unless the illegal cutting of their wires would be stopped.

Beloria lamented that the phone company suffered losses amounting to P1 million due to the thefts, which started last month in areas serviced by the PLDT.

The PLDT wires were usually cut in the evenings. These were stripped off of their rubber cover to get the copper, which were then sold to junk shops.

Dante Bermejo, Capiz provincial administrator, called a meeting with the PLDT and police officials on Monday to discuss the problem.

Bermejo said not only PLDT was victimized by this rampant cutting of wires but also Globelines and two cable TV companies—Alto and Wesfardell.

The PLDT serves the towns of Panay, Panitan, Pontevedra, Sigma, Mambusao, Jamindan and Sapian as well as Roxas City. The Globelines also served other towns of Capiz.

Felipe Celino, PDI Visayas Bureau

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Felipe said the employee immediately called Teddy Gerbacio, president of the Truckers' Association at the North Harbor. It was Gerbacio who, in turn, sought the help of the TMG.

He said that upon receiving the report, the TMG's Task Force Limbas in Camp Crame alerted all its mobile units in Metro Manila, Central Luzon and Southern Tagalog.

Moments later, the truck was sighted along the southbound lane of SLEx in Bicutan. *Marlon Ramos and Romulo Ponte, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*

NO TO ADDED TAX
DAVAO CITY

TAXING BING GONZALES/PDI MINDANAO BUREAU

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Baguio employees sue judge seeking CA post

By Vincent Cabreza
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In 2002, Ayson again accused Borreta of violating his oath of office as a trial court judge when he represented a client in a land sale transaction that apparently went sour.

On Friday, Assistant City Treasurer Alicia Onoza and 23 City Hall employees and workers of the Baguio Water District sued Borreta and his client to reclaim P348,500, representing their cash advances for lots they had reserved in an undeveloped area bridging Baguio and La Trinidad town in Benguet. The group also asked for damages and legal fees amounting to P152,550.

"I feel that a frustrated applicant (to the CA) is orchestrating all these things, to discredit my nomination to the CA," Borreta said in a telephone interview on Wednesday. "Why will they time the filing of a case against me now when the deal occurred in 2001 when I was still serving as Baguio judge?"

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Borreta said the tribunal had yet to resolve Ayson's charges against the Baguio judges.

Borreta maintained that his transactions were "above-board."

In their complaint, the government workers said they were enticed to join a community mortgage program by then Mayor Bernardo Vergara in September 2001.

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Pathetic, gov says of sugar exec's words on importation

By Carla P. Gomez
PDI Visayas Bureau

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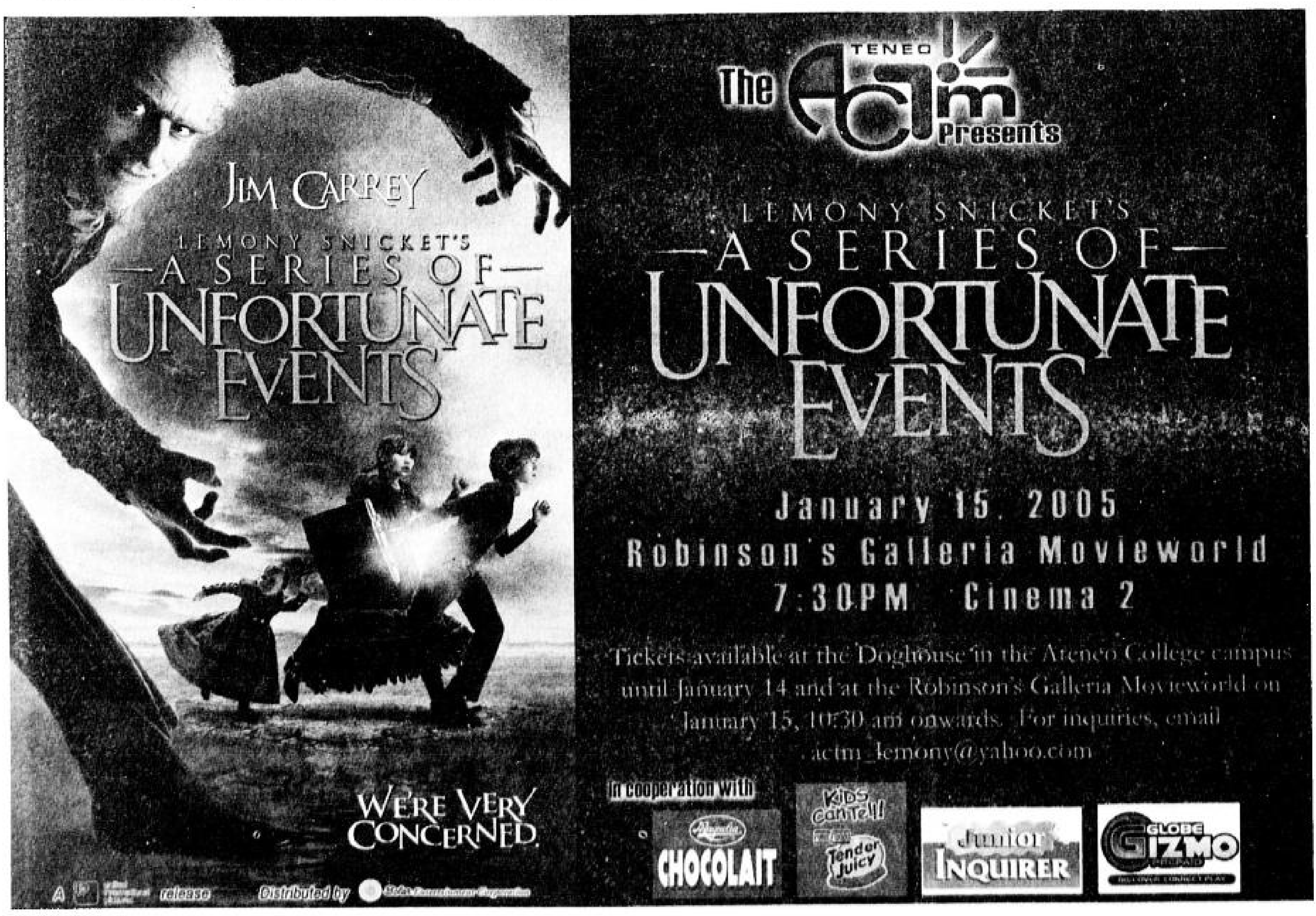

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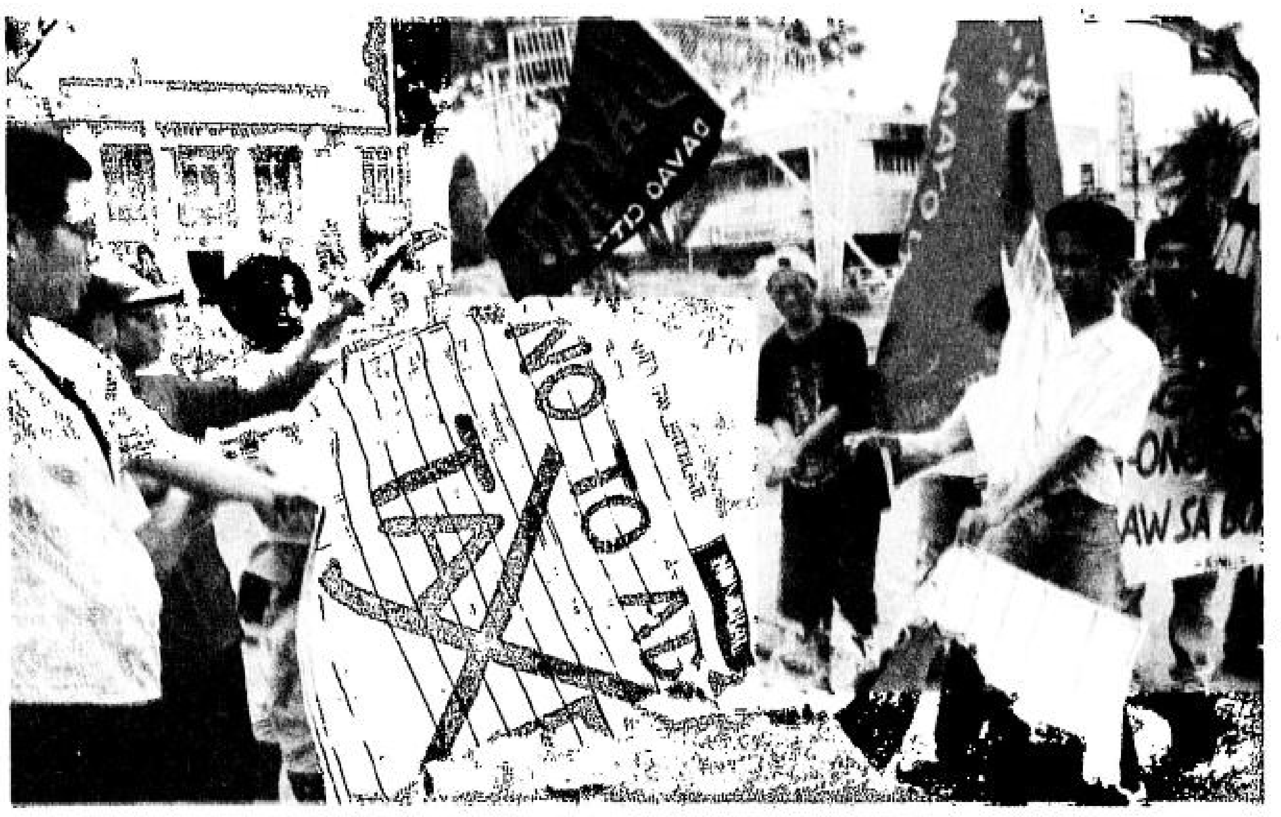

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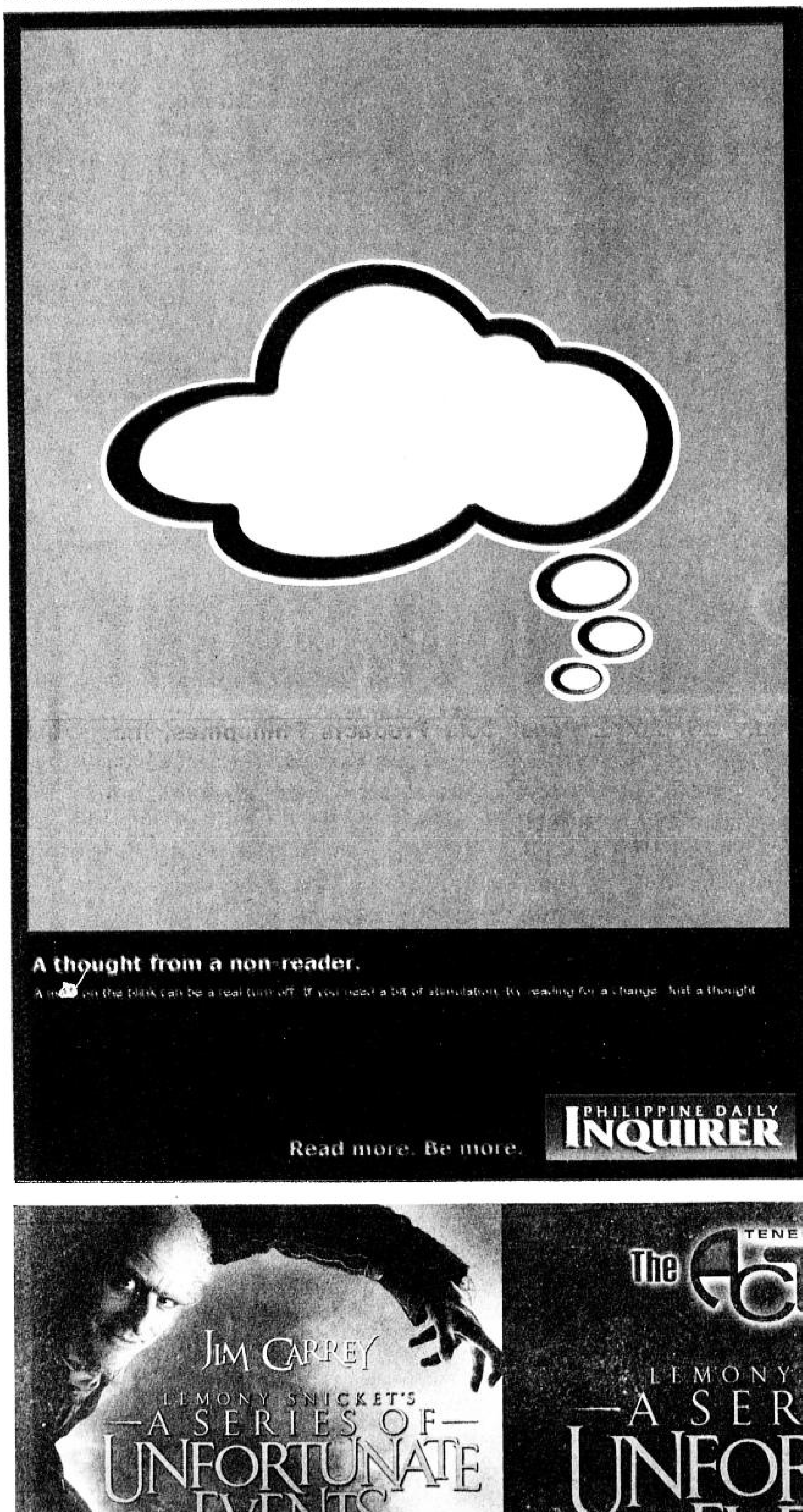
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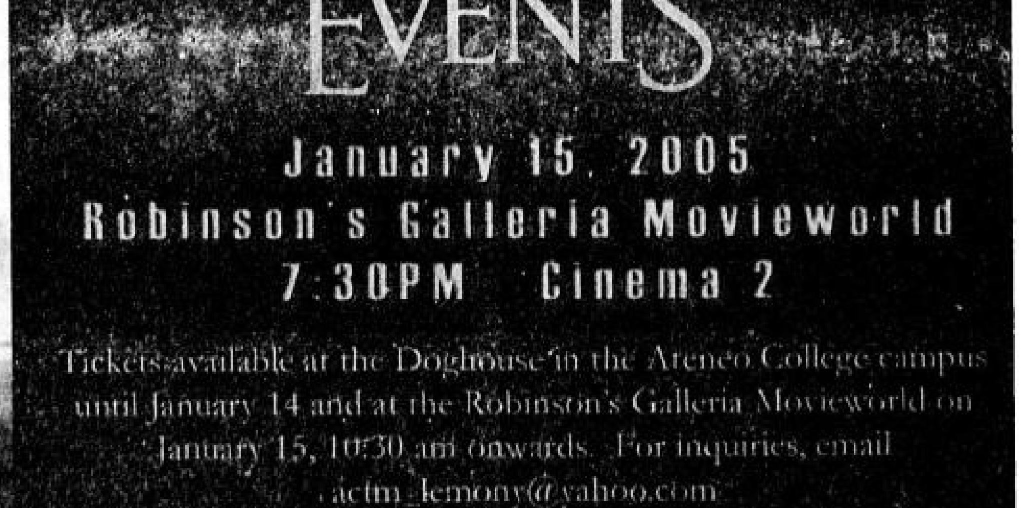
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PENALTY

TROY MALCOLM/PDI MINDANAO BUREAU

Three members of the Special Weapons and Tactics Team and an officer of the Davao police force perform push-ups as punishment after their superiors found that their firearms were not well maintained.

ARMM mayors complain of scam in PNP recruitment of new cops

COTABATO CITY—Several mayors in the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao are complaining of a new scam at the Philippine National Police—recruitment for a fee.

A number of the mayors, mostly from Maguindanao and Lanao del Sur, complained that applicants whom they had endorsed to become new policemen were being asked to pay P100,000 to P300,000 each to ensure admittance into the Philippine National Police.

"This is highly . . . irregular—to bribe recruits into the police force," said Sultan Kudarat Mayor Tocao Mastura of Maguindanao.

"I'm not a lawyer but I know that Attorney Amadeo has violated two memorandum circulars of the National Police Commission (on police recruitment)," said Mastura, referring to Napolcom-ARMM Director Mamerto Amadeo.

In his case, the mayor said, from his town's quota of six police applicants, "only one had been sworn in despite the fact that five had passed the qualifying and agility exams."

The missing slots, he alleged, had been filled up by outsiders.

Amadeo debunked the charges and said he was willing to be investigated.

Aggrieved applicants and their patrons (the mayors) said they had evidence to show that admission into the PNP was for a fee.

Senior Supt. Sukarno Ikbala, regional police director, begged off when asked to comment, saying the Napolcom should be the right source.

Training of police recruits are held at Camp General Pendatun, the PNP regional base in Parang, Maguindanao.

Ricardo Enero, Napolcom screening board chair, said he was in Manila when his board vice chair, Amadeo, officiated the oath-taking of the new recruits.

Enero said he had the master list of qualified applicants who passed the examinations.

He vowed to look into the allegations by the mayors that some of their endorsed applicants in the list had not been sworn in by Amadeo during the ceremony.

Mastura, acting as spokesperson of the other displeased mayors, said that in Maguindanao alone, 40 of the 55 applicants lost their slots, apparently because they failed to shell out money for them to be included in the list of recruits.

Some applicants who made it confided that indeed they gave money, but they were hesitant to come out in the open, Mastura said, adding that he might be able to persuade them to expose the anomaly.

Amadeo asked the disgruntled applicants and their patrons not to despair since recruitment into the police force "is a continuing process."

The endorsement of town chief executives of police recruits is mandated by the PNP and approved by the Department of the Interior and Local Government.

Interior Secretary Angelo Reyes assured Mastura and the other mayors that their complaints would be addressed with dispatch through Napolcom representatives from Manila. *Charlie Señase, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

Aurora belongs to which region? Execs confused

CAMP OLIVAS, Pampanga—The basic information on which region Aurora belongs to has escaped some members of the body tasked with coordinating disaster management response in Central Luzon.

In Tuesday's meeting of the Regional Disaster Coordinating Council (RDCC) here, some representatives of national and regional agencies did not know that Aurora had been reverted to Central Luzon through Executive Order 103 issued by President Macapagal-Arroyo on May 17, 2002.

Aurora used to belong to Southern Tagalog, which EO 103 divided into Calabarzon (Cavite, Laguna, Batangas, Rizal and Quezon or Region 4-A) and Mimaropa (Mindoro Occidental and Oriental, Marinduque, Romblon and Palawan or Region 4-B).

Ernesto Verceles of the Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration (Pagasa), and Ramona Julabar of the Philippine Institute of Volcanology and Seismology (Phivolcs) admitted the slip and apologized for not citing data on hazards specific to Aurora.

Verceles conducts climate studies on a national scale, while Julabar manages the Mt. Pinatubo observation post in Clark.

Other RDCC representatives who recently assumed their posts and had been unaware of Aurora's transfer to Central Luzon promised to correct the oversight.

Often, Aurora is mistaken as part of Quezon. The confusion stemmed from the fact that the administrative management of Aurora had been tossed from one province to another.

Historical records showed that the territories of Aurora used to be parts of Pampanga, Nueva Ecija and Quezon. In 1951, the subprovince of Aurora was created and in 1979, Aurora was named the 73rd province of the country.

Enrique Galang, former Central Luzon police director, found Aurora's transfer to Central Luzon timely.

On the heels of the landslides in November and December last year, Central Luzon agencies responded quickly.

If Aurora was still with Southern Tagalog, Galang said agencies there would have to cross Metro Manila, Bulacan and Nueva Ecija by land or the Pacific Ocean to reach the province.

Of Central Luzon's seven provinces, it is Aurora that immediately faces the Pacific Ocean and it is at risk from earthquake-triggered tsunamis. Aurora is covered by the monitoring work of the Hawaii-based Pacific Ocean Tsunami Watch Center. *Tonette Orejas, PDI Central Luzon Desk*

German says he will appeal indictment for Boracay killings

By Nestor P. Burgos Jr.
PDI Visayas Bureau

ILOILO CITY—A German indicted in last year's killings on Boracay Island in Aklan will appeal the resolution of the provincial prosecutor's office.

On behalf of his client Uwe Friesl, lawyer Jaime Ma. Flores II said he would file a motion for reconsideration of the 10-page resolution signed by Provincial Prosecutor Lourdes Quimpo-Mayor.

"Uwe has no intention of fleeing. He wants to clear his name and prove his innocence," Flores said in a telephone interview.

But he said his client was "very surprised and worried and could not understand why he was being charged.",

Flores questioned the resolution released on Monday, charging Friesl with four counts of murder for the death of fellow German Anton Forstenhausler, Swiss-born vineyard owner Manfred Schoeni, Hong Kong-based architect John James Cowperthwaite, and Forstenhausler's Filipino maid Erma Sarmiento.

"I felt that there was complete disregard of the evidence presented to the prosecutor's office," said Flores.

Footprints

In her resolution, Mayor gave credence to police claim that the set of footprint specimens taken near the lavatory of the second floor of the mansion where the three victims where found matched those of Friesl.

Friesl, 37, said in his counter-affidavit that his footprints were there because the police asked him to help identify the victims shortly after the bodies were found.

The victims were found dead with multiple stab wounds on May 3, 2004, at Forstenhausler's three-story mansion called Dolce Vita, which sits on top of Mt. Luho at Sitio Bulabog in Barangay Balabag.

Flores said Mayor disregarded testimonies of witnesses showing that it was "physically impossible" for Friesl to be at the crime scene.

"Two injustices are being committed by charging an innocent man and denying justice to the deceased," he said.

Flores said he found it "highly irregular" that Mayor drafted the resolution instead of investigating prosecutor Montalid Patnubay.

Familiarity

He said Patnubay should have drafted the resolution because he was the one most familiar with the case.

But Mayor said that while it was the usual procedure for the investigating prosecutor to draft the resolution, it was at the discretion of the provincial prosecutor to assign another prosecutor to do so.

She said she drafted the resolution herself because she and Patnubay had disagreements on the conclusions. She refused to elaborate.

"A resolution has been issued and it stands. The parties could appeal the resolution if they wish to do so," she said in a telephone interview.

PUBLIC ANNOUNCEMENT

Effective January 16, 2005, Pepsi Cola Products Philippines, Inc. (PCPPI) takes over from Alternative Beverages Company, Inc. (ABCI) manufacturing, marketing, promotions, sales and distribution responsibilities for Gatorade Thirst Quencher.

On this date, Alternative Beverages Company, Inc. (ABCI) ceases to be the Philippine Licensee for Gatorade Thirst Quencher.

As Gatorade Thirst Quencher will now form part of Pepsi Cola Products Philippines, Inc. (PCPPI) beverage portfolio, all concerns, queries and/or claims regarding the marketing, promotions, selling and distribution of Gatorade Thirst Quencher must be directed to Pepsi-Cola Products Philippines, Inc. (PCPPI).

We, ALTERNATIVE BEVERAGES COMPANY, INC. (ABCI) and its distributors wish to thank Filipino consumers for having supported us when we introduced Gatorade into the Philippine market in 1995 and brought it to unprecedented sales growth and market leadership over the past ten (10) years that we carried the brand.

ALTERNATIVE BEVERAGES COMPANY, INC. (ABCI), a Filipino owned and managed company, commits itself to continue to provide the Filipino consumer with high-quality, good-value beverage products and looks forward to the same consumer support for its other brands: Snapple, Coffee House Iced Coffee and Fruit Works Juice Drinks.

The Management and Staff of
abc
ALTERNATIVE BEVERAGES COMPANY, INC.

Snapple
Coffee House
Fruit Works

More plots to threaten GMA this year

From page A1

agendas and informal leaders," he said, adding that without one figure to unite these groups, it would be difficult for them to plan and finance a coup attempt.

"There will be another dynamic involved here," Tujan said, adding that in the absence of an alternative from the opposition, "a collective leadership" might be considered as an alternative to Ms Arroyo.

He said the idea of a "collective leadership" had become "acceptable among the progressives."

Combative mode

Tujan said coup rumors had fizzled out and would continue to do so because there was no "broad opposition" to speak of.

The "legal Left," for example—or the alliance of militant groups that have won party-list seats in Congress—has yet to align with the mainstream opposition groups, he said.

But Tujan said it was "clear" that Estrada had "taken on a combative mode" since Poe's death last month, and that he was still capable of "uniting the opposition" because of his stature.

Tujan also conceded that based on Ibon surveys, the people still viewed in a "positive" light some aspects of the Arroyo administration, particularly its social welfare projects and foreign policy.

He noted that the President kept "strong links" to big business, the Church and the United States, which was why, he said, deposing her would be "harder" compared to the ouster of Estrada in 2001.

Reforming the AFP

Robles, who now serves as a military consultant to the Arroyo administration, said the best way for the President to prevent coup attempts would be to address the demands of the military, mainly controlling corruption and modernizing the poorly equipped AFP.

He said this would include reforming the military pension system and improving military benefits.

In a talk with diplomats and members of the media Wednesday night, the President expressed confidence that she would finish her term.

She crushed a brief mutiny in 2003 by the Magdalo group, some 300 junior officers who had accused her and her top officials of corruption. But the trial of the mutineers has been delayed for months by various legal maneuvers.

But despite her efforts to mollify the military, there have been continued rumors that a new destabilization attempt may be brewing.

The Philippines suffered a spate of rightist military coup attempts in the late 1980s, during the administration of President Corazon Aquino, which brought the economy to its knees.

Estrada, Marcos parallels

The attitude of the United States toward Ms Arroyo will be crucial to her security as President, Tujan said, drawing parallels from the experiences of Estrada and the late dictator Ferdinand Marcos.

"The US has not considered her yet a part of the problem. They still see her as part of the solution. To many people, she is still a part of the solution, not a part of the problem," he said.

But he also said that without instituting basic reforms, Ms Arroyo would go the way of Marcos and Estrada.

Marcos reached the point where the United States and the Filipinos saw him as "part of the problem," Tujan said.

He said the US attitude toward Marcos "forced" the dictator to call for a "snap" election in February 1986, which led to his ouster that same month.

Replacement

A similar situation was reached during Estrada's term, Tujan said, although the US government "never issued a public statement about its dislike for Estrada."

Tujan said there was also the question of "what or who to replace Ms Arroyo with."

"We cannot flip-flop on this issue—like we replaced Estrada with GMA, and now we will replace GMA with Estrada. *Hindi pwedeng pabalik-balik tayong ganoon* (We can't go back and forth like that)," he said.

Tujan said that while Poe's widow, Susan Roces, had expressed the wish to replace him in the electoral protest he had filed before the Supreme Court, this did not mean that Roces could be a politician.

"There are talks about this scenario because there's a parallelism in the past, with Cory Aquino. But there is no comparison," he said, citing the fact that Poe died a natural death while Benigno "Ninoy" Aquino Jr. was assassinated. *With an AFP report*

15,000 cops on alert for Erap arrival

"PALATIAL temporary home," Agence France-Presse describes the Estrada apartment in Hong Kong where he was interviewed while sitting on a "throne-like" chair.

AFP

From page A1

"Why, is it wrong to entertain my friends and my former officials?" Estrada reiterated, referring to the dinner he hosted for former members of his Cabinet and their families at the Parkview.

He said he could not wait to return to the Philippines, not only to prove his critics wrong, but to unite the opposition and wage a revolution against poverty.

Estrada pointed out that economic conditions in the Philippines were so bad that almost all Filipinos wanted to find work abroad.

"*Pati nga yung barbero ko, gusto nang mag-*TNT (*tago nang tago*) *dito. Sabi ng barbero ko, mas maganda pa ang buhay dito kaysa sa Pilipinas* (Even my barber wants to overstay in Hong Kong. He says life is better here than in the Philippines)," Estrada said.

He also said he decided to return home when his doctors told him he could take his therapist along.

15,200 on alert

Metro Manila's 15,200 officers will go on full alert tomorrow to ensure Estrada's safe return, Director Avelino Razon Jr., head of the National Capital Region Police Office, announced at a press conference yesterday.

According to Razon, going on alert would allow the PNP to call back officers on leave or off duty.

"Policemen are doing so many things, guarding so many vital installations, these days. And with Estrada's return, we will need enough officers to go on duty," he said.

Razon said as many as 10,000 policemen might be deployed to provide route and area security from the Ninoy Aquino International Airport to the ousted President's detention quarters, his vacation house in Tanay, Rizal,

The number is apart from those who will serve as his close-in security as soon as his plane touches down, Razon said.

Primordial concern

That job will rest with the Police Security and Protection Office, the PNP unit assigned to secure VIPs like Estrada.

"Our primordial concern is the safety of the former President," Razon told the Inquirer. "We will do everything to make sure that he will be safe as soon as he returns."

But despite the massive deployment, the PNP is not actually expecting a destabilization effort by Estrada supporters, Razon said.

As proof of the PNP's "calm," he offered the "normal security" it had supposedly put up around Malacañang.

"Although there are so many rumors about a destabilization, they remain only that—a rumor," Razon said.

Orange ribbons

Estrada's route back to detention will be festooned with orange ribbons, and motorcades and other welcome frills are being prepared in various parts of Metro Manila.

He will be "greeted with the sight of hundreds of thousands" of ribbons in the color that marked his campaign for the presidency in 1998, said his Partido ng Masang Pilipino (PMP).

"This is just one way of showing him the solidarity of his friends and supporters who continue to be by his side and who are now ecstatic over the positive developments in his health," his spokesperson Didagen Dilangalen said in a statement.

Dilangalen said Estrada's homecoming would show that "he's truly a man of his word, and that there was never any cause to doubt that he would abide by what the court has decreed" regarding his medical furlough.

The planned motorcade to mark the ex-President's arrival will run through Edsa, Ayala Avenue and Quezon Avenue, the PMP said.

It described the welcome arrangements as "a grand homecoming fit for a conquering hero." *With reports from Christian V. Esguerra and Volt Contreras*

Sandoval to comply with SC decision

SANDIGANBAYAN Justice Edilberto Sandoval told reporters that he would comply with the Supreme Court decision turning down his Jan. 10 resignation as chief of the special division hearing Estrada's plunder case.

He said he would definitely preside over the next plunder hearing scheduled next week, in compliance with the tribunal's order.

But as though to indicate that he would pursue his attempt to resign, Sandoval said he would soon submit to the high court medical certificates certifying that he was suffering from "vertigo" and "recurring asthma."

Erap denies whooping it up in ₱.5M-a-month HK flat

From page A1

at reports that he was living up to his reputation and using his visit here as an excuse to party.

"Those days are gone. I have responsibilities now," he said.

The 67-year-old Estrada has filled newspaper headlines since he arrived in Hong Kong on Dec. 27. It was even suggested that visits by members of his former Cabinet signaled that he was planning a coup to topple President Macapagal-Arroyo.

The truth is completely different, he said from a throne-like chair in a US$10,000-a-month, or about P560,000, plush rented apartment at the Parkview.

"I am in this apartment on doctors' orders. There was a yellow alert in the [Hong Kong Adventist Hospital] because someone was brought in with meningitis and it was recommended I leave," he said.

Four Philippine police guards in the apartment and the presence of Consul General Susan Castrence and a doctor during the interview attested to the official approval of the move.

Estrada also swore he had not been living it up, as a report by his police escorts had suggested: "I ate dinner with friends, what is wrong with that? And the authorities would not give me leave to have a haircut before I came here, so I brought over my barber. Where is the harm in that?"

Dull eyes

Wearing a faded wristband bearing the presidential seal of office and looking drawn in a pair of white jeans hanging around a hunched frame that in more opulent times was portly, Estrada now bears few of the rugged good looks that made him a movie icon.

His black-dyed hair is immaculately swept back but his eyes are so dull that were it not for the fact he was speaking lucidly, one could be forgiven for thinking he was still living his hard-drinking life.

In his palatial temporary home here, he is surrounded by about a dozen friends.

Random women and children (whom he simply describes as friends) noisily wandered in and out, and a huge spread of food was picked at by the guards, a group of elderly women and his doctor.

Afraid of their shadows

For a man facing a possible death penalty, Estrada's mind is doggedly fixed on Ms Arroyo.

While he still spoke the populist bluster of saving the poor that won him a landslide presidential election in 1998, his utterances were full of spite and vitriol for his one-time vice president.

"They are afraid of their own shadows," he said of the Arroyo administration. "They are afraid of me."

Estrada said Ms Arroyo and her supporters were behind the stories swirling around his visit here.

"They are conspiracy theories put about by the government, big business and [former Manila Archbishop Jaime] Cardinal Sin," he said. "I stirred the ire of the Church and the businessmen. They are frightened of my popularity."

Illegitimate gov't

He even overlooked the resignation—since rejected by the Supreme Court—of his nemesis, Sandiganbayan Justice Edilberto Sandoval, who had tried harder than most to prevent him from leaving the Philippines, to continue his swipes at Ms Arroyo.

"He (Sandoval) is part of the government. The government is run by the few, not by the people. It is illegitimate," he said.

He also claimed to be optimistic about his chances of beating the plunder charge, saying the prosecution had too flimsy a case against him.

But just in case, Estrada has taken out another insurance policy: religion.

When he was first detained in 2001, the once hard-living actor said he "found salvation in the Lord," and he has since prayed for an hour every day.

His newfound belief will help him in his trial, he said.

God's purpose

"God has been gracious to me. He made me a superstar actor, He made me mayor, He made me senator and He made me president," Estrada said, suddenly looking very grave. "Maybe God has His own purpose for doing this to me, but I believe that He will deliver justice." *AFP*

Salonga dared: Lead impeachment charges vs GMA

From page A1

founded, were doing its share in seeking justice in the Estrada trial.

Impeachment is a potent "weapon" that could be used to check alleged infractions by Ms Arroyo, but Salonga doubts if members of the House of Representatives will "wield this weapon."

"It's not likely that they (House of Representatives) will pick it up because a number of them are beholden to the President," Salonga said in a telephone interview. "The weapon is available, but who will wield it?"

The action to impeach the President starts at the House of Representatives. A complaint can be filed by any member of the House or by any citizen endorsed by a congressman. The grounds for impeachment are culpable violation of the Constitution, treason, bribery, graft and corruption, other high crimes, or betrayal of the public trust.

Compassion not against law

As expected, Malacañang disagreed with Salonga's opinion.

"We respect the views of the former Senate President but we have to disagree that President Arroyo's policy of justice with compassion violates the law," Press Secretary Ignacio Bunye said in a statement.

Bunye said Ms Arroyo had never interfered in the decisions of the Sandiganbayan in the case of Estrada.

"Well, basically, the President is *maawain*. She's compassionate and this was acknowledged by the former President," Bunye said in an interview.

The press secretary justified Estrada's trip to Hong Kong where the former President underwent surgery to replace his arthritic knees. "His trial will proceed more smoothly because his medical condition has been resolved," Bunye said.

As for Salonga's observation that Ms Arroyo would do anything to stay in power, Bunye said: "The President stated clearly last (Wednesday) night that she's here to serve her mandate and she will serve up to the end of her term and she will fulfill the 10-point program."

Unfair

Justice Secretary Raul Gonzalez challenged Salonga's claim that Ms Arroyo could be impeached for allowing Estrada to leave the country.

"Senator Salonga's comments are unfair to the President. The fact is, (allowing Estrada's travel abroad) is not an impeachable offense. What is the offense of the President here?" Gonzalez said.

He said that Ms Arroyo did not put pressure on the Sandiganbayan when it allowed Estrada to leave for knee surgery in Hong Kong.

Gonzalez noted that civil rights leaders like Salonga should remember that even the Marcos dictatorship allowed dissidents like Benigno "Ninoy" Aquino, Jose "Pepe" Diokno and Salonga himself to leave the country for medical reasons.

"Jovy should remember that when he was arrested during the height of martial law, he was allowed to go to Hawaii and later to Los Angeles where he hibernated until he returned during Edsa I," he added.

Gonzalez said that accusing Ms Arroyo of having had a hand in allowing Estrada's travel abroad was like "equating her to the courts."

No evidence

"The implication is that the courts, including the Supreme Court, is under the thumb of GMA. That's very unfair. It was the courts that allowed him to leave," he said.

In the House of Representatives, Muntinlupa Rep. Rozanno Rufino Biazon said impeaching Ms Arroyo under the 13th Congress would be next to impossible.

"He [Salonga] may have his legal opinion, but the political reality is that GMA (the President) has an overwhelming number of allies in the House. An impeachment on those grounds at this time will not prosper," Biazon said.

Another member of the House dismissed Salonga's accusation against the President as "baseless."

House Majority Leader Prospero Nograles said Salonga should have known better, being a legal luminary. "In golf, we call that out of bounds, with a two stroke penalty," he said.

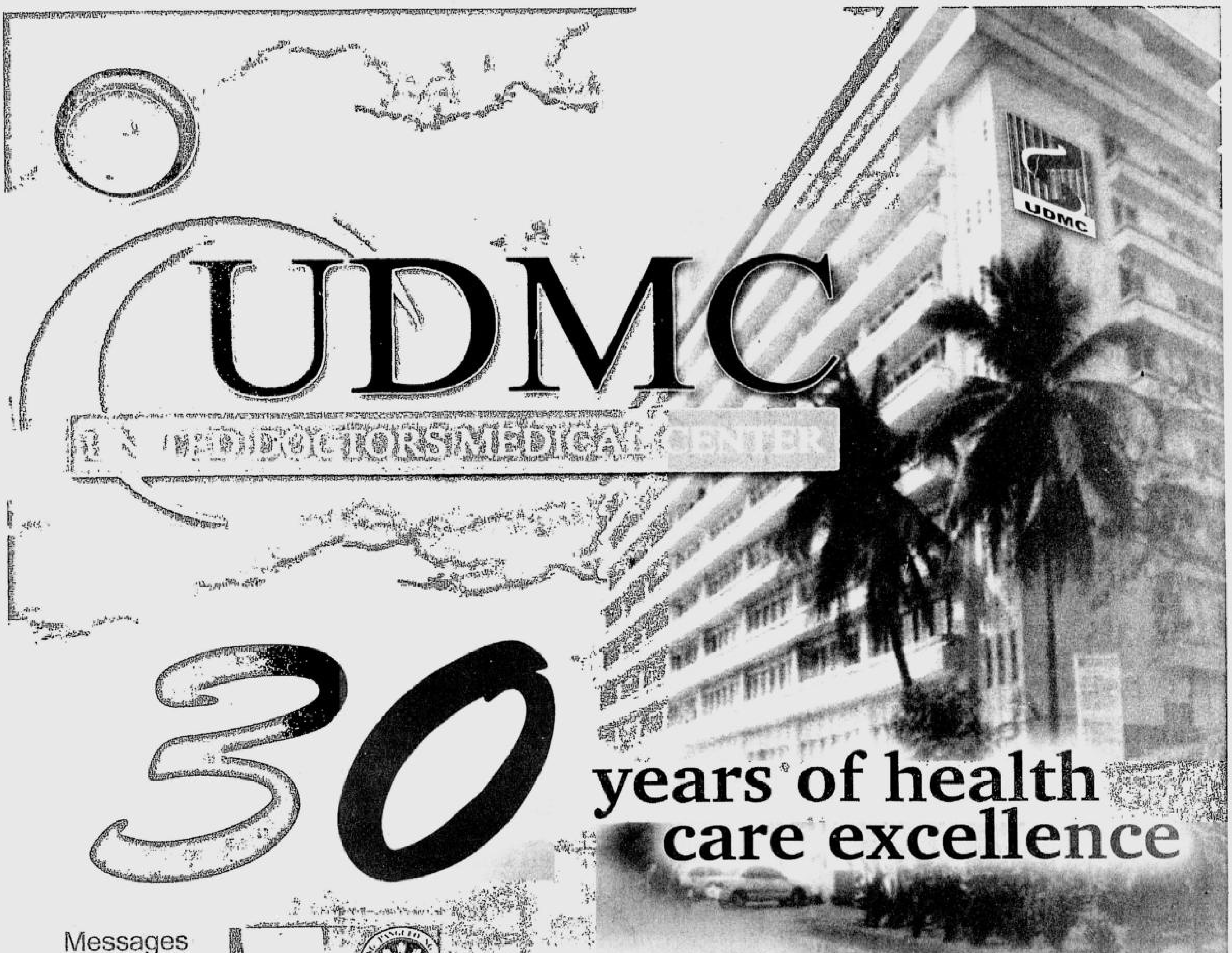
Nograles said the Sandiganbayan's approval of Estrada's motions and requests was not the result of a compromise with the Arroyo administration.

"There is no iota of evidence that the President ever influenced the court to allow Estrada's medical treatment in Hong Kong," he said.

But the Bagong Alyansang Makabayan said Salonga's legal opinion should prompt groups seeking to constitutionally force the President out of Malacañang to seriously study the possibility of another impeachment case.

Gerry Corpuz, Pamalakaya information officer, said progressive groups had already considered impeaching the President after allied militant groups came up with a plunder charge against her last year for allegedly using government funds for her election campaign.

"If the plunder case is dismissed then, we'd probably move toward impeachment," Corpuz told the Inquirer. *With reports from Juliet Labog-Javellana and Cynthia D. Balana*



UDMC

UNITED DOCTORS MEDICAL CENTER

30 years of health care excellence

Messages

I greet the personnel, medical staff and administration of **United Doctors Medical Center (UDMC)** as you celebrate your ***30th Anniversary.***

Congratulations for doing a good job in providing quality medical services to our countrymen. Through thirty years of professional health and medical care, the UDMC has earned the reputation as a center of excellence in the medical field.

I seek your cooperation and support as we strive to improve the quality of public health facilities and services, reduce the cost of medicines, and promote a better quality of life for our people. With your help and prayers, the Philippines shall beat the odds!

Happy anniversary and more power to all of you!

Gloria Arroyo
GLORIA MACAPAGAL-ARROYO

Greetings!

To the trustees, officers, medical practitioners, and employees of United Doctors Medical Center, I wish to extend my sincerest congratulatory greetings on your 30th founding anniversary!

During the last 30 years, UDMC has undoubtedly erected an enduring legacy of quality healthcare in our society. The institution's commitment to excellence and dedication to social responsibility accurately mirror the true value of its 30-year history and clearly reflect the essence of its continued existence in the years to come.

What you have is a tradition of quality Christian service in the medical field. In the highly competitive industry you are in, such tradition created not only a competitive niche but also a mark of distinction both for the institution and its people.

You should continue with the UDMC tradition and fuel your growth with it – for in the end, your success will be measured not by the bottom line financial figures but by the extent to which you served others.

Congratulations and more power!

DR. RAMON RICARDO A. ROQUE, CESO 1
Deputy Secretary General

2005 marks the 30th Year of UDMC's continued dedication to provide quality health care to all patients.

Without your cooperation and hard work, this occasion will not be possible.

Congratulation to everyone!!!

DELFIN A. TAN, M.D.
President

I am very pleased to extend my cordial greetings to the administration of the United Doctors Medical Center in celebration of our 30th Foundation Anniversary with the theme "30 years of healthcare excellence."

Through the years UDMC has solidly demonstrated its commitment to provide quality care to the public. The growth and success we enjoy as a medical center in our country can be attributed to the untiring efforts of all members of the organization.

With the support and commitment of everyone, it is my fervent hope that we will continue to work together hand in hand in pursuit of our vision for UDMC to continue to provide affordable quality healthcare for all.

Congratulations!

PETER P. LAUREL
Chairman of the Board

It is with great pride and joy that I congratulate each and every individual who make up the United Doctors Medical Center on the occasion of our 30th founding anniversary.

Three decades of service dedicated to the improvement of health and prolongation of life of our fellowmen mark this day as incomparable to none. Thus, we are not only inclined, but are duly bound to continue improving the selfless service we have imparted to our patients, as we look forward to more years ahead.

With this in mind, let us celebrate and thank our Lord Almighty for giving us the opportunity to provide better healthcare to the entire Filipino nation.

Again, congratulations and to God be the glory!

EDITA F. ENATSU
General Manager/Treasurer

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LTFRB CRACKDOWN

7,000 taxis to lose franchise

By Clarissa S. Batino

MORE than 7,000 taxi franchises could be up for grabs if the Land Transportation Franchising and Regulatory Board (LTFRB) makes good its threat that it would cancel the permits of taxis with meters that were not calibrated last year.

"We are canceling the permits of 7,412 taxis because of the failure of its operators to have their meters calibrated during the prescribed period," LTFRB Chair Maria Elena Bautista told the INQUIRER yesterday.

Requirement

Meter calibration is required each time taxis are allowed to adjust their fares.

The LTFRB earlier allowed cabs to raise the flag down rate for the first 500 meters from P25 to P30 and the succeeding distance of 300 meters from P2 to P2.50 centavos starting Oct. 16, provided their meters were calibrated.

Of the 42,000 taxis registered with the agency, Bautista said more than 7,000 did not comply with the requirement.

She said owners of the franchises about to be canceled would have 15 days to ask for a reconsideration to justify their failure to meet the requirement.

The LTFRB has not issued new permits for taxis since Bautista became head of the agency in December 2003.

Bautista said the calibration period was only for two weeks, but the LTFRB extended it to 10 weeks to accommodate everybody.

"After 10 weeks, some operators were still not able to comply, so we are canceling their permits," she said.

New hike

Bautista added that the LTFRB was planning to increase its fees and charges this year by about 20 percent as ordered by the finance department.

She said the agency exceeded its 2004 revenue target of P353 million by about 30 percent.

This year, the LTFRB must collect P370 million from fees and penalties.

"We surpassed the target last year because we really collected everything that we should collect, including penalties," said Bautista.

Now it's Claudio's turn

By Tina G. Santos

PRESIDENTIAL Adviser on Political Affairs Gabriel Claudio has filed a P1-million libel suit against the 23-year-old woman who accused him of sexually assaulting her last year.

Charged before the Quezon City Prosecutor's Office were Rechel Togon, of Barangay Catmon, Malabon City; and her alleged cohorts Benjamin de Peralta, reportedly a tabloid reporter; Michael Isla and Nazareno Laygo, both of Tecson Street, Sta. Cruz, Manila.

The case stemmed from Togon's filing of rape charges against Claudio on Nov. 17.

Claim retracted

In the complaint, which she later retracted, Togon accused Claudio of raping her inside a house in Fairview, Quezon City, sometime in October.

Togon, who used the name Lailani Manansala, also claimed that she was a resident of Oroquieta Street, Sta. Cruz, Manila.

Claudio said he was shocked and outraged over the fabricated allegations, saying it was a demolition job against him.

Claudio also learned that the name Lailani Manansala and her address were fictitious.

A week after filing her complaint, Togon resurfaced to deny that any rape ever took place, saying she executed the malicious and fabricated complaints against Claudio on orders of De Peralta, Isla and Laygo.

2 village officials face raps

By Leila B. Salaverria

TWO OFFICERS of the Multinational Village Homeowners Association in Parañaque are facing complaints of illegal possession of drug-making equipment in relation to a raid by the National Bureau of Investigation inside the village last year.

The complaint, which the NBI submitted to Chief State prosecutor Jovencito Zuño on Wednesday, named Arnel Gacutan, of Matthew Street, Multinational Village, and Jose Alberto Araneta, of Stardust Street in Moonwalk Village, as the accused.

Gacutan was earlier identified as the president of the homeowners association and Araneta as his security officer.

The NBI in November 2004 raided a house at the Bulaong Compound inside Multinational Village and found drug-making equipment and chemicals. The equipment were those seized from an alleged shabu laboratory earlier raided in the same village.

After the complaint regarding the first raid was dismissed, Gacutan and Araneta allegedly prevented police from taking the drug-making equipment, citing the lack of proper documents. Instead, the two association officers kept the equipment in the house at the Bulaong Compound.

The NBI questioned the storage of the drug equipment at the compound, pointing out that all confiscated drug equipment must be turned over to the Philippine Drug Enforcement Agency.

In the complaint submitted to the DOJ, Multinational Village security officer Godofredo Bulaong said the house at the Bulaong Compound that the NBI raided in November belonged to Gacutan and Araneta.

MAGLAKAD
AT
MAG-ABANG
SA
BANGKETA
MMDA
MOBILE PATROL GROUP
TRAFFIC PATROL

HERE they come. A vehicle of the Metropolitan Manila Development Authority (MMDA) implementing the wet rag scheme on Edsa drives alongside a pedestrian apparently running to meet an appointment during a dry run yesterday. ERIC ARAZAS

Ready or not, 'wet rag' scheme takes off Monday

By Margaux C. Ortiz and Tina G. Santos

BEGINNING Monday, pedestrians who refuse to wait for their rides in designated areas will have to be on their toes to avoid getting wet.

The Metropolitan Manila Development Authority (MMDA) would still push through with the "wet cloth scheme" to keep hardheaded pedestrians off the roads, despite protests from mayors in the metropolis and a warning from the Commission on Human Rights that the "wet rag scheme" was not only a violation of human rights, but a criminal act as well.

Commissioner Dominador Calamba III said the scheme is akin to slapping someone on the face, and the affected pedestrian could file charges of slight physical injuries and slander against the MMDA.

MMDA Chair Bayani Fernando said they would start deploying sound trucks and mobiles with wet blankets in major thoroughfares next week.

There was no need to coordinate with the mayors regarding the new policy, he added.

Reacting to criticism that he was violating human rights, Fernando said he was just exercising his executive prerogative.

"The MMDA would deploy its vehicles only in areas where the agency has jurisdiction," he added.

Warning

MMDA Traffic Operations Center Executive Director Angelito Vergel de Dios said the trucks carrying the wet blankets to be "hung like flags" would sound a warning first before "wetting" the more hardheaded ones who refuse to stay in designated areas.

Vergel de Dios said they resorted to the new scheme after failing in the past to keep commuters from blocking the roads while waiting for public utility vehicles.

The MMDA official said recalcitrant commuters would be made to render community service on the first offense, and pay fines depending on the local government unit on the second offense.

Upon the third offense, violators would be detained in prison vans where they would be made to undergo refresher courses on road rules.

Calamba, however, urged commuters to file their complaints before the CHR if they are "punished" by the MMDA using the "wet rag" scheme.

Diesel cargo stolen

By Ruth L. Navarra

NINE seafarers were arrested in Mandaluyong City Wednesday night after their employer accused them of stealing P1.9 million in diesel fuel.

Arrested were Gerry Lagrada, 39, ship captain; Eleuterio Rollorata, 52, chief engineer; Eduardo Desales, 53, chief mate; Joel Bato, 29, oiler; Francisco Rosales, 33, oiler; Seamen Alberto Gregorio, 47; Marcelo Diaz, 36; Ronald Ventic, 23; and John Dogueles, 33, ship apprentice.

They were accused by Water Ways Services Inc. of conspiring to steal 85,000 liters of diesel gasoline, said SPO4 Arnaldo Tarrayo.

Arrested

The ship crew were arrested at about 9 p.m. inside the office of Filpride Resources Inc., at 304 J.P. Rizal St., Brgy. Mabini-J. Rizal, Mandaluyong.

Police said Water Ways accused its employees of theft after it discovered P1.9 million worth of diesel missing from the barge which the crew manned.

The theft allegedly took place during 16 of the voyages made by the barge between Subic Bay and Filpride's depot in Mandaluyong.

In a police report, the crew allegedly conspired to steal diesel on several occasions between April to Dec. 21, 2004.

Tampered equipment

They allegedly manipulated equipment on the barge to make it appear that the tank was already empty even when it still had diesel in it.

Excess fuel cargo were then allegedly placed in another container.

The police believe that the suspects sold the diesel to another buyer.

The suspects will be charged with qualified theft.

3 kidnappers meted the death penalty

By Tina G. Santos

THREE men accused of kidnapping two Chinese-Filipino traders in Quezon City in 2003 have been meted the death penalty.

Judge Vivencio Baclig of the Quezon City Regional Trial Court Branch 76 imposed capital punishment on Primo Arena, 45, of Antipolo City; Antonio Tan, 49, of Binondo, Manila; and Benjamin Dy, 61, of Bagong Barrio, Caloocan City.

The three have been found guilty of kidnapping Mason Ang, 39, and his sister Jenny on April 3, 2003.

A fourth accused, Demetrio Manliclic, was sentenced to 17 years in prison as an accessory. He was tagged as one of those who took the ransom money.

In his decision, Baclig also ordered the accused to pay the victims P5 million, representing the ransom, and P100,000 in damages.

Court records showed that the accused took the victims, of Bellevue III, Grace Village, Quezon City, along Bonifacio Street, Bagbaguin, Valenzuela City.

The victims were taken to a safe house in Cogeo, Antipolo City.

Mason said he believed his family paid the P5-million ransom as they were released the following day in Barangay San Roque, Marikina City. His car was also found abandoned the same day in front of a fast food store on Katipunan Avenue, Quezon City.

He added that the accused also took his and his sister's personal belongings, including watch, cellular phones, wallet, ring and necklace.

However, the court dismissed the robbery charges against the accused for lack of jurisdiction.

Last year, Arena, Tan and Dy managed to escape from the Quezon City Jail but were re-arrested.

The defense of the accused, who still have kidnap-for-ransom cases pending before two other Quezon City courts, failed to convince the court to clear them of the charges.

Baclig said the mere denial of the accused was weak. *With a report from Arlene A. Ferrer*

It's a boy for Rosanna's Grace

By Nini Valera

CONTROVERSIAL actress Rosanna "Osang" Roces is now a grandmother.

Her daughter, Grace Adriano, 15, gave birth yesterday at 1:30 p.m. to a seven-pound boy. He will be called Jose Gabriel (nickname: Leone).

Grace had a normal delivery according to Dr. Suyen Granados Rivera. Jolo Revilla, 16, the baby's father, had to skip school to be with Grace who was brought to the Cardinal Santos Hospital at 8 a.m. yesterday. Jolo is the second son of Sen. Bong Revilla and actress Lani Mercado.

Osang and Lani, both first time grandmothers, were at the delivery room to witness the event, with Lani recording the birth on video. "It was hard shooting and watching Grace having a hard time," Lani told the INQUIRER.

Grace did not want Jolo to witness the delivery. But the senator, who arrived at the hospital at 2 p.m., went straight to the delivery room to join relatives and friends waiting for news about the birth.

LEONE REM ZAMORA

E. Tabanyag; 85

DR. ELISA R. Tabanyag of the UP College of Medicine Class 1942 and a retiree of the Manila Health Department passed away on Jan. 11 at the St. Luke's Medical Center.

She was 85.

She is survived by husband Zacarias "Taby" Tabanyag of Fistorama and Filgolf fame, and children Teresita and Kihie Ueda, Taby Jr. and Maricris, Zeng and Jun Alañon and Ramon and grandchildren.

Interment is set tomorrow at the Manila Memorial Park in Sucat after a 9 a.m. Mass in Arlington Pasig.

Miranda to speak before Kilosbayan

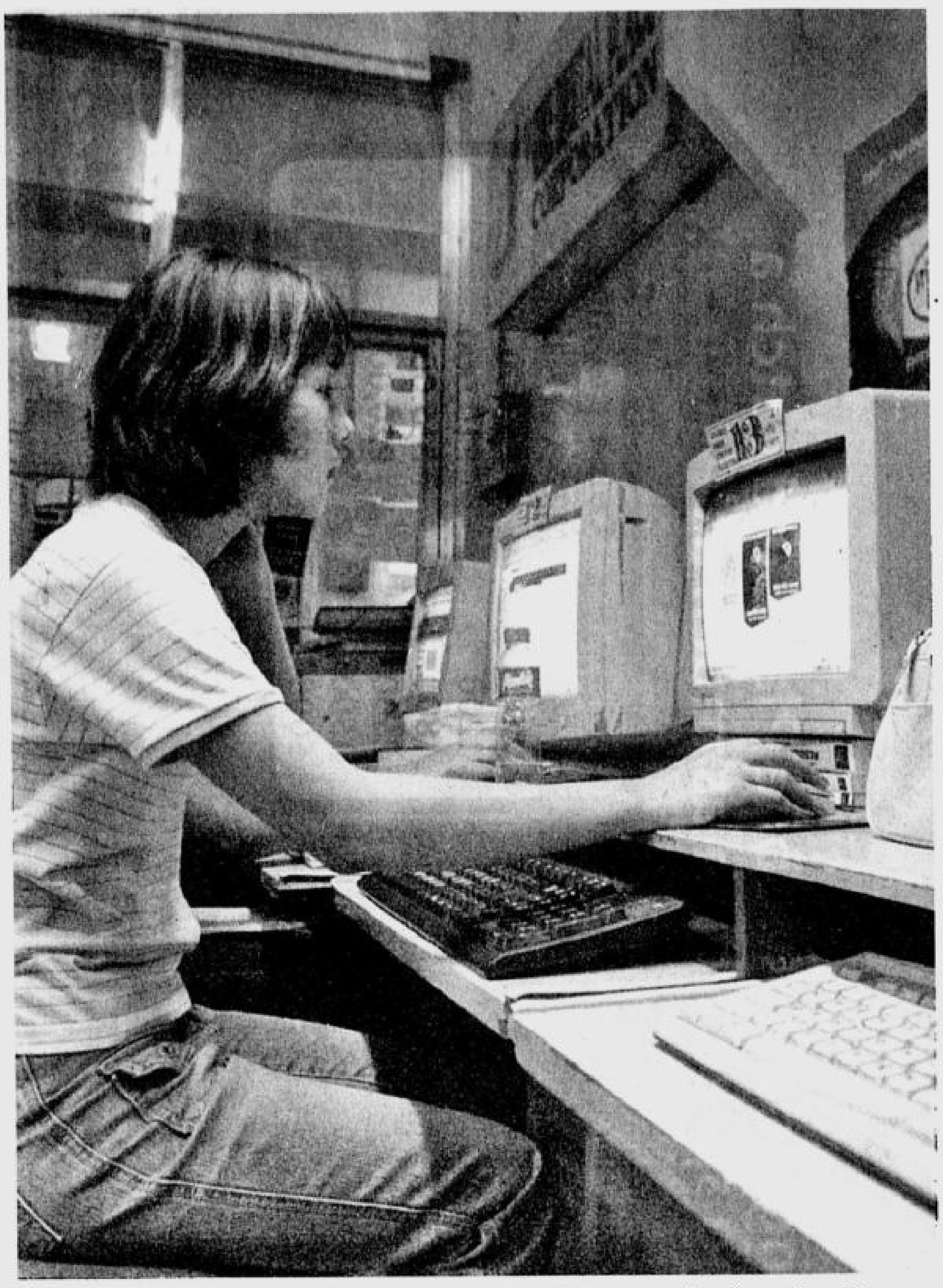
A FORUM featuring Prof. Felipe B. Miranda will be held at the Malcolm Hall, UP College of Law, Diliman, Quezon City, on Jan. 14 at 2 p.m.

Prof. Felipe B. Miranda will discuss "Our Quality of Life: the People's View."

Following his speech, a panel of Kilosbayan leaders headed by former Ambassador Sedfrey A. Ordonez and ex-Civil Service Chair Corazon Alma de Leon will begin the open forum.

Kilosbayan officers and trustees will give an award to Gov. Grace M. Padaca as Woman of the Year 2004.

The forum will be open to the public and Kilosbayan is inviting all interested to attend.



A LETTER purportedly sent by people who set fire to an ABS-CBN van was allegedly sent from One Digital Place (in photo) in Diliman, Quezon City. JOAN BONDOC

2 more Nida slay witnesses to come out, say probers

By Philip C. Tubeza

TWO MORE witnesses are expected to come forward to bolster the government's case in the murder of actress Nida Blanca, Justice Secretary Raul Gonzalez said yesterday.

Gonzalez said the two possible witnesses: a tabloid employee and an employee of the Movie and Television Review and Classification Board, are expected to reinforce the second extradition request against Rod Lauren Strunk, Blanca's husband and a principal suspect in the crime.

Gonzalez earlier presented to the media witnesses Andrada "Anji" Dalandas and Fedelyn "Mariz" Canonio.

"We are now preparing the extradition request. (The testimonies of Canonio and Dalandas) have already strengthened our case but with these other witnesses, it would be much stronger," Gonzalez said.

The tabloid employee, a native of Marinduque, allegedly saw three persons fetch Blanca from the Atlanta Centre building hours before she was found dead.

The witness was soliciting movie ads when he saw two men and a woman come out of the building's elevator and "escorted". Blanca to a pick-up truck, Gonzalez said.

"The two men had Blanca between them, while the woman walked behind them," Gonzalez said.

He said the witness might also be able to identify the woman, who was also allegedly involved in the planning of Blanca's murder.

He said the new witness might present himself before the Department of Justice today.

Blanca was found dead inside her car at the Atlanta Centre's carpark on the sixth floor in the morning of Nov. 7, 2001.

Dalandas had identified—through National Bureau of Investigation pictures—Strunk, Philip Medel Jr. and businessman Mike Martinez as among the four men who brought an unconscious Blanca back to the building at around 1 a.m. that day.

She claimed that she also saw Medel punch Blanca on the left side of her face as the actress was transferred to her car.

Gonzalez said Dalandas got frightened after seeing Medel punch Blanca and fled from the scene. She later heard the van leave, he added.

The government had charged Strunk and Medel before the Pasig City Regional Court for the actress' killing.

Strunk left the country on Jan. 21, 2002 to tend to his ailing mother in California. He has since refused to go back to the Philippines, saying that he would not get a fair trial in the country.

Gonzalez noted that Strunk had not been arraigned and could still face trial if he is extradited back to the country.

Also yesterday, the Pasig Regional Trial Court ordered the transfer of suspect Philip Medel Jr. from an NBI detention cell, where he had been staying since volunteering and later recanting his testimony, to a city jail.

Judge Alex Quiros granted the request of NBI Director Reynaldo Wycoco to transfer Medel to the jail in Nagpayong.

Quiroz is handling the murder charges against Medel and Blanca's American husband, Strunk.

Earlier, Gonzalez ordered Wycoco to transfer him to a local jail now that a new witness had placed him at the scene of Blanca's murder.

Gonzales said Medel should not be enjoying the comfort of an "NBI hotel."

"Acting on the ex-parte motion to relinquish the custody of the accused filed by the NBI… the same is hereby granted," Quiroz wrote in his decision.

NBI closes in on TV van arsonists

By Leila B. Salaverria

THE NATIONAL Bureau of Investigation is a step closer to identifying the people who sent the e-mail claiming responsibility for the burning of the ABS-CBN's OB van on Monday.

The computer that was used to send the said e-mail was traced on Wednesday night to an Internet cafe at the shopping center of the University of the Philippines campus in Diliman, Quezon City.

NBI officials refused to name the Internet cafe but media reports showed its agents examining a computer at the One Digital Place shop at the UP shopping complex.

The sender used computer number 13 out of 14 computers at the Internet cafe, according to Atty. Elfren Meneses, chief of the NBI's Anti-Fraud and Computer Crime Division (AFCCD).

The message claiming responsibility for the van's burning was sent by a group calling itself "K," which also said they instigated the attack on behalf of Poe and accused the network of "suppressing the truth" in its election coverage.

E-mail address

The message was sent to GMA 7 on Monday from the address juandelacruz1105@yahoo.com.

Meneses also said that since it had been confirmed that the e-mail was sent from the Internet cafe in UP, the bureau's next step was to determine its sender.

"We would now try to find out who had been using the computer at the time the e-mail was sent," he told reporters.

Meneses said the e-mail account was only created at 7:03 a.m. on Jan. 11, three hours after the OB van attack.

Meneses said the Internet cafe where computer 13 was found opens at 9 a.m., which means it would be easier to narrow down who had access to the computers even before the cafe opens.

He added that operatives would ask the employees at the cafe if they knew who entered the area during the given time and if so, to give descriptions of those people so that artists' sketches could be made.

Meneses also said yesterday the bureau was able to locate computer 13 by tracing the Internet provider address from the e-mail message sent to GMA 7.

San Ildefonso celebrates fiesta of patron saint

SAN ILDEFONSO, Bulacan, will celebrate its fiesta from Jan. 14 to 23 honoring St. Ildephonsus, who defended the perpetual virginity of the Blessed Virgin Mary.

A miraculous image of the saint has been enthroned at the San Ildefonso Parish for the past 120 years. This year's caretaker of the fiesta, Dr. Gil Villacorte, had the altar restored in old wood and gold leaf in Gothic design.

At 7:30 a.m. on Jan. 14, people will meet the sacred relic of the saint at Barangay Maasin Bridge which will be brought in the Pope's Mobile. A motorcade will follow. Mayor Edgardo Galvez and parish priest Fr. Rolly Ilustre Ang will lead the motorcade.

At 5:15 p.m. the giving and vesting of San Ildefonso with a chasuble by the Blessed Virgin will be re-enacted followed by the installation of the officers and members of the Hermandad de San Ildefonso.

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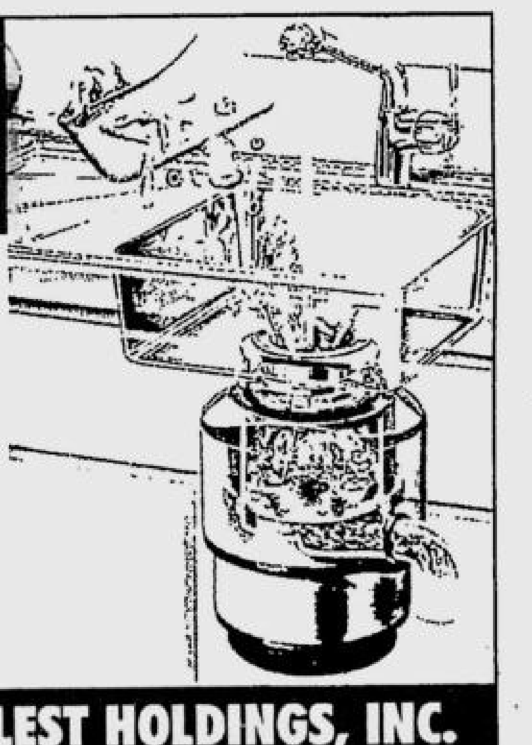


Chemical firm allowed to open

By Luige A. del Puerto

THE CHEMICAL firm suspected of downing 25 students in Pasig City in September last year may soon be back in business with a temporary lifting order from the Environmental Management Bureau of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources.

But Pasig Mayor Vicente "Enteng" Eusebio said the plant would remain closed as he had ordered.

The bureau issued on Monday a temporary lifting order in favor of LMG Chemical Corp.

"That is the DENR's order. As far as I'm concerned, they can't operate here," Eusebio told the INQUIRER. "I won't allow it. I don't know why they issued that order, but the plant will remain closed," the mayor said.

Eusebio said the only way the plant could open is for the city to renew its business permit. "We have already canceled their business permit so if they operate, it would be illegal," he said.

He said it would stay closed unless environment officials could assure the safety of nearby residents.

The DENR-NCR order, signed by Regional Director Sixto Tolentino Jr. and addressed to LMG General Manager Jose Fernandez stated: "The Multipartite Monitoring Team for LMC Chemicals Corp., in its report to the Execom dated December 1, 2004, concluded that all remedial measures were undertaken by LMG Chemical Corp. such as the complete replacement of heat exchange tubes and other installations, and purchase of machines and other monitoring equipment as part of the enhanced Environmental Management Plan… The said Cease and Desist Order is hereby temporarily lifted for a period of 30 days."

This would enable the team to assess the efficiency of the preventive measures instituted by the chemical plant, according to the order.

Failure to meet air quality standards and violations of the Environment Compliance Certificate would mean the automatic nullification of the TLO and the re-imposition of the Cease and Desist Order.

LMG official Jose Fernandez agreed that without the consent of the city, the plant would remain closed.

"We'll have to wait for Mayor Eusebio to issue a similar TLO so we can really start (operating)," he said.

"We will appeal to him. This is not just hurting the industry but also the government.

From a technical standpoint, the DENR is in the best position to establish whether our measures are adequate to ensure the safe operation of the acid plant once we are allowed to operate," he said.

He added that the 30-day period is simply meant to test the improvements made by the plant.

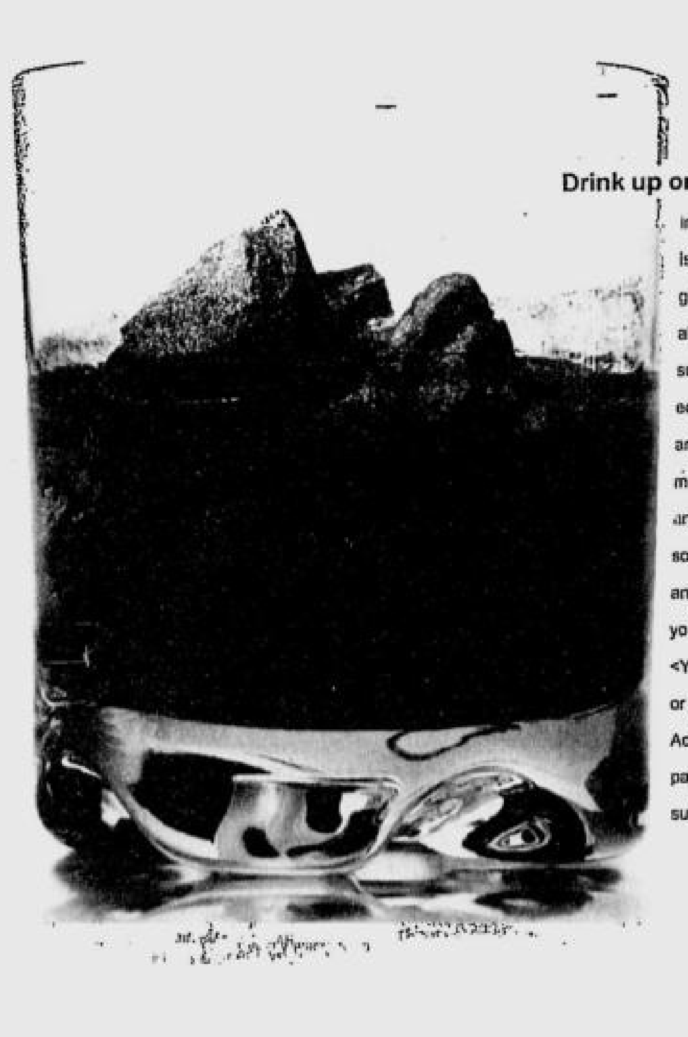
Last September, winds had carried toxic fumes, supposedly from the plant, to the San Joaquin Elementary School, forcing school officials to send students who had inhaled the fumes to a medical center.

Minor leaks had earlier been reported in the area then according to Racquel Austria-Naciongayo, head of the City Environment and Natural Resources Office.

A furious Eusebio himself saw to it that the plant was shut down.

The city promptly revoked the permit of LMG Chemical Corp., located inside the Chemphil Compound on Elisco Road, Barangay Kalawaan, and handed down a "cease and desist order" against the firm.

The plant produces sulfuric acid, an ingredient used in making soap and acid battery.



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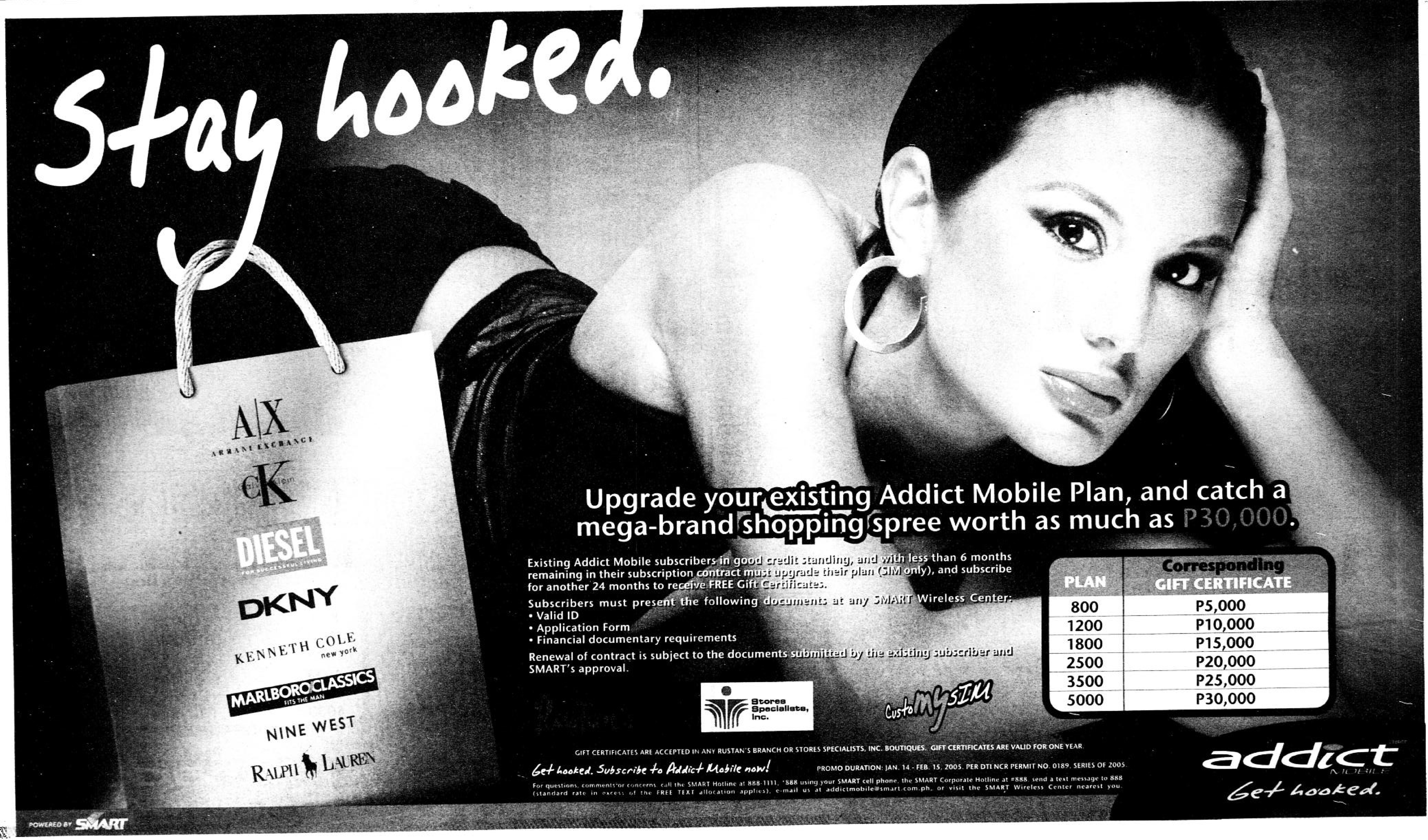
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BASKETBALL: US NCAA—Duke vs NC State; 8 a.m. (r-4 p.m.); Georgia Tech vs North Carolina; 10 a.m.; ESPN—See the Blue Devils tangle with the Wolfpack while check out the replay of the battle between the Yellow Jackets and the Tar Heels.
NBA-Cavs vs Lakers; 11:30 a.m. (r-9 p.m.); STAR Sports—It's LeBron against Kobe at the Staples Center.
TENNIS: 2002 Australian Open Highlights; 11:30 p.m.; STAR Sports—Take a look back at the best moments from Melbourne Park three years ago.
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WHAT'S INSIDE

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■ In-form Villaroman wrests two-shot lead /A27

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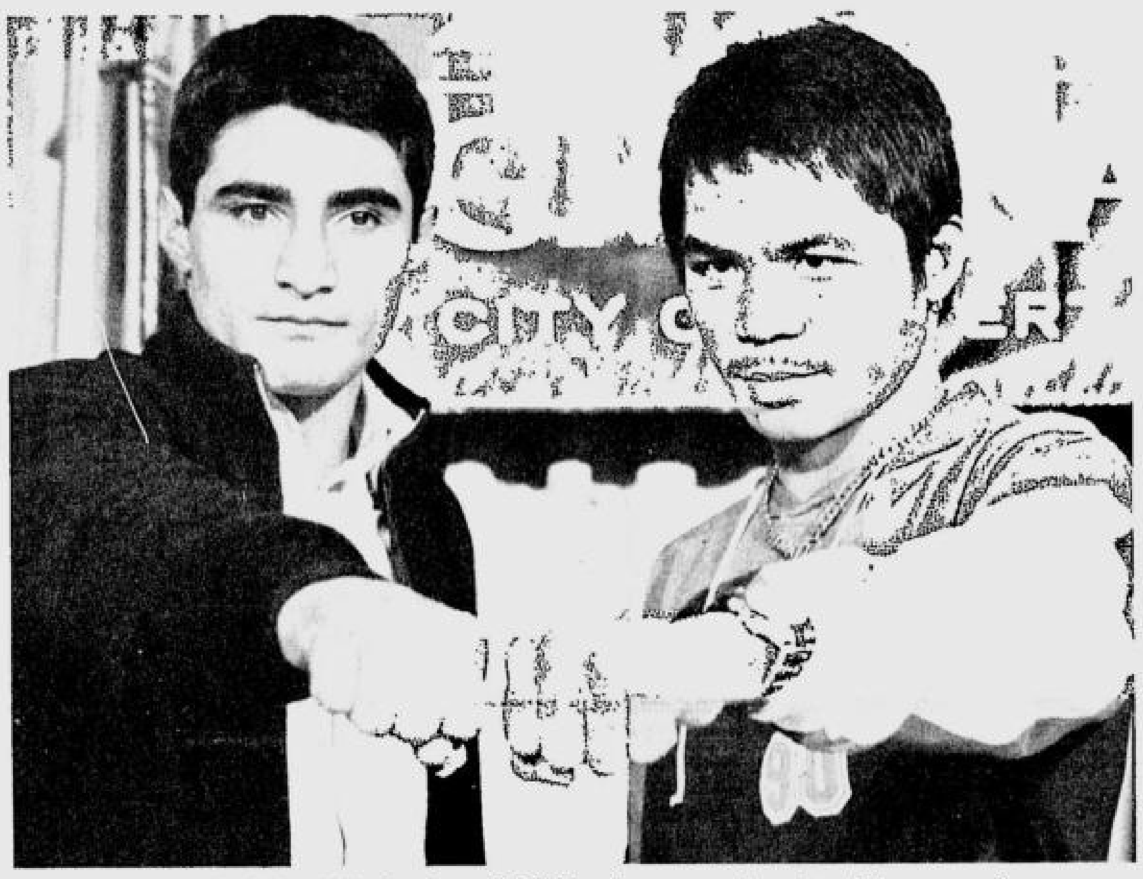
Vegas bookmakers pick Pacquiao to win

$1.75-million purse for Filipino ring idol

By Recah Trinidad



MANNY Pacquiao (right) and Mexican legend Erik Morales get together after their news conference Wednesday at the MGM Grand in Beverly Hills, California. They clash on March 19. AP

LOS ANGELES, California—Manny Pacquiao said he was not a bit surprised when promoters announced yesterday that he would get a $1.75-million purse for his March 19 fight against Erik Morales at the MGM Grand in Las Vegas.

Pacquiao was, however, left dumbfounded when told that bookmakers in Las Vegas have installed him the favorite against Morales, the prizefight superstar from Tijuana, Mexico.

"Manny is favored at odds of minus 160," his trainer, Freddie Roach, told the INQUIRER yesterday.

This means, Roach explained, that those who would wager $160 would be paid $100 if Pacquiao wins.

On the other hand, a winning $100 gamble on Morales would pay $160.

Pacquiao said he knew his purse would be doubled after promoters decided to shove off Juan Manuel Marquez, his original foe, in favor of the sensational Morales.

Marquez left in the cold

Marquez's financial demands are reported to have caused the breakdown of the rematch. As a result, World Boxing Association and International Boxing Federation champion Marquez has been left in the cold.

Pacquiao showed up in a handsome blue attire and advised those who attended the fight press con at the Beverly Hills Hotel on Sunset Boulevard not to miss his clash with Morales.

"I'm excited, I'm ready to do my best. It will be one of the most memorable fights in history," Pacquiao said.

Morales, who showed up in a black jacket and later posed for promo photos with Pacquiao, said he does not duck anybody and would be glad to fight Pacquiao.

"It will be a great fight," assured the three-time world champ who lost his world 130-pound crown to arch-rival Marco Antonio Barrera last November.

Pacquiao, 26, spoke in straight English while the 28-year-old Morales talked in Spanish and was helped by an interpreter.

Great event for fans

"As they did in 2004, Morales and Pacquiao continue to participate in some of boxing's most exciting and compelling match-ups," said Mark Taffet, HBO senior vice president of sports operations and pay-per-view. "This should be a great event for pay-per-view boxing fans."

Pacquiao, who will step up in weight to take on Morales, said he had all the while expected the fight to be carried on pay-per-view which should assure him a 40-percent cut from the proceeds.

This early, Pacquiao's earnings—from his purse and the percentage from pay-per-view sales—are sure to set a record for a fighter from the Orient.

Pacquiao's stellar role will boost sales, with the March 19 mainer predicted to break the $15-million PPV earnings of the Barrera-Morales bout last November.

Unlike Pacquiao, who appeared amazed, Roach said the early odds in favor of Pacquiao did not come as a surprise.

"Barrera beat Morales on points the last time, while Manny had stopped Barrera. This is the reason for these odds," Roach told the INQUIRER.

Even betting at fight time

The famous fight mentor, voted trainer of the year in 2003, however, said betting should be pretty even come fight time.

After stopping Barrera in November 2003, Pacquiao dropped Juan Manuel Marquez, the WBA/IBF featherweight champ, three times in the first round of their title fight in Las Vegas last May but later settled for a controversial split draw.

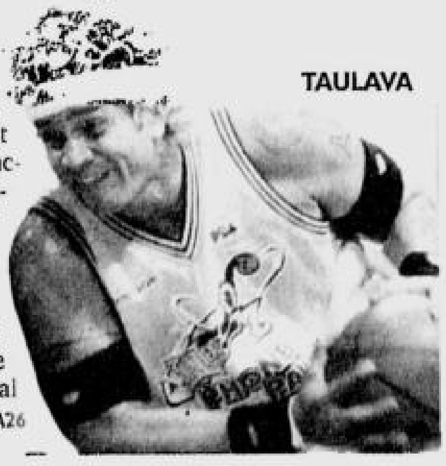
Pacquiao arrived here last week to train for the original rematch against Marquez where he was supposed to get a $900,000 purse.

Marquez, allotted only a $750,000 purse, refused to sign up,

VEGAS/ A26

DOJ to appeal new injunction against Taulava deportation

By Philip C. Tubeza



TAULAVA

THE GOVERNMENT will ask a Manila court to set aside its permanent injunction against the deportation of Talk 'N Text cager Asi Taulava, Justice Secretary Raul Gonzalez said yesterday.

Gonzalez said he had ordered the Office of the Solicitor General to appeal

DOJ/ A26

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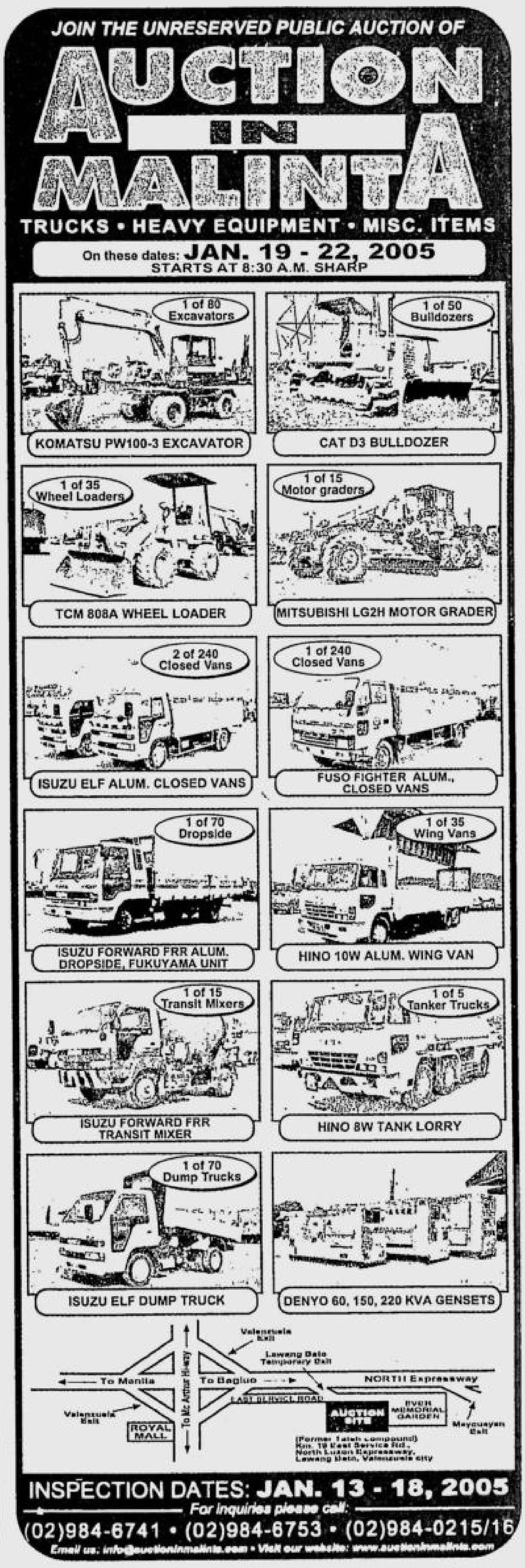
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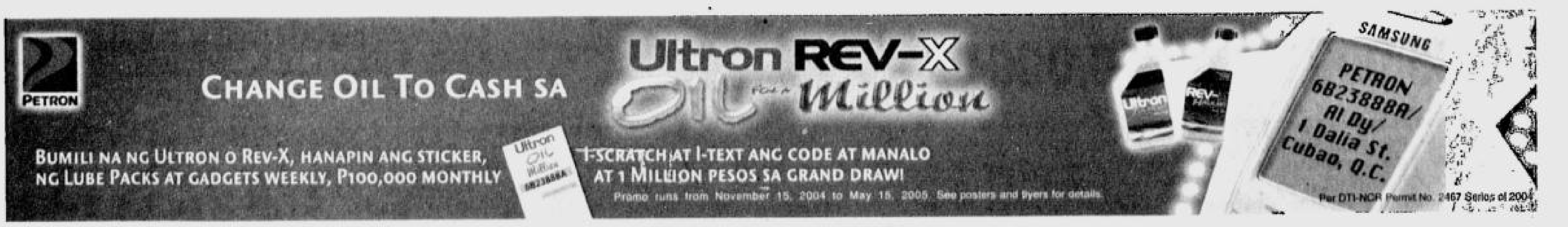
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Taulava holds out hope for national quintet slot

By June Navarro

ASI TAULAVA doesn't only want to be reinstated by the Philippine Basketball Association. The Talk 'N Text star is also hoping to again play for the national team.

"I'm going to call him (national coach Chot Reyes) up and offer my services to the national team," said Taulava, who played for the PBA-backed RP team which landed fourth in the 2002 Busan Asian Games.

Taulava spoke to sportswriters a day after a Manila court issued a permanent injunction stopping the Department of Justice and the Bureau of Immigration from conducting deportation proceedings against the Phone Pal center.

"It's a small personal victory for me but hopefully I get more of it in the future," said Taulava.

PBA commissioner Noli Eala declared, however, that the permanent injunction in no way affects the league's earlier decision to suspend Taulava.

A Quezon City court has already turned down twice Taulava's motion to have his suspension lifted by the PBA.

Eala said the league would study the implications of the injunction and at the same time consider how it would affect the stand of the PBA on Taulava.

Purefoods downed Coca-Cola,74-71, yesterday to advance to a best-of-3 quarterfinals against Shell in the Gran Matador PBA Philippine Cup at the Philsports Arena.

Taulava has been practicing with the Phone Pals to keep him in tip-top shape.

He is playing with a group of American dribblers who were brought over by former TNT coach Bill Bayno for a series of tune-up games against the Phone Pals, who are waiting for their opponent in the semifinals along with Barangay Ginebra.

The league suspended Taulava based on the findings of the DOJ, which ruled that the citizenship papers of the Talk 'N Text star and those of five other foreign-born players were spurious.

But Judge Romulo Lopez of the Manila regional trial court branch 34, in a decision dated Jan. 6, said the DOJ and the BI cannot "denationalize him (Taulava) on the basis of inconclusive pieces of evidence which were gathered without affording him his day in court."

A holder of a Philippine passport, Taulava represented the Philippines in the 2004 Busan Asian Games and has two daughters with his Filipino wife, the former Anna May M. Corveau.

The court said the DOJ and the BID have no authority and jurisdiction to cancel the recognition of Filipino citizenship issued to Taulava by the DOJ four years ago.

Eagles keep on soaring, trim Knights

JONATHAN Piñera of Toyota Otis-Letran swipes the ball from Rey Mendoza of AMP-Ateneo during their game yesterday. AUGUST DELA CRUZ

ADDICT Mobile-Ateneo repeated over Toyota Otis-Letran, 67-57, yesterday to clinch the third quarterfinal berth in the PBL Open Championship at the Pasig Sports Center.

Magnum Membrere scored seven of his 11 points in the fourth quarter, leading the Eagles to a 6-8 record, while shoving the Knights to the brink of elimination.

Letran's chance of making it to the next round now rests on a Welcoat win over La Salle tomorrow.

A Welcoat win would give Letran and La Salle similar 5-9 records, but the Intramuros-based squad will advance by virtue of a superior quotient, having beaten the Archers twice earlier.

Granny Goose got back at first-round tormentor Air Philippines, 80-73, earlier to close out with a 9-5 record.

Jett Latonio and JR Quinahan gave the Tortillos the lift in the final quarter, combining for 10 points as Granny Goose dealt the Flight their 12th loss in 14 games.

STANDINGS	W	L
Montaña	10	3
Magnolia	10	3
Granny Goose	9	5
Welcoat	7	6
ICTSI	5	8
Toyota-Otis	5	8
AMP	5	8
Air Phils.	2	12

GAMES TOMORROW
(*Pasig Sports Center*)
2 p.m.—Welcoat vs ICTSI-La Salle
4 p.m.—Magnolia FEU vs Montaña

Hardly a factor in the first three quarters, Latonio scored all of his six points from the three-point zone.

Quinahan, meanwhile, hit back-to-back baskets, including a surprise three-point shot with seven minutes left as the Snackmasters slowly pulled away from a tight contest.

Granny Goose wound up with a 9-5 record and can draw either ICTSI-La Salle or Toyota Otis-Letran as foes with a twice-to-beat edge in the quarterfinals.

More than getting back at the only team that beat his Tortillos in the first round, coach Jun Tan liked the rate his team is peaking.

"The boys are playing better," said Tan." It's a good sign going to the quarterfinals."

With their 12th straight loss, the Flight tied the league's longest losing run since Chaz Perfume lost all its 12 elimination games in 1999.

The scores:

First Game

GRANNY GOOSE 80—Concha 17, Almeda 13, Cruz 9, Quinahan 8, Latonio 6, Santos VJ 6, Cervantes 4, Santos A. 4, David 4, Mangubat 4, Larong 3, Capati 2, Grijaldo 0, Lanete 0.

AIR PHILIPPINES 73—Vizcarra 18, Holper 16, Epondulan 15, Hubalde 8, Te 4, Tolentino 4, Joe 2, Pua 2, Garrido 2, Aljamal 2, Gomez 0, Paterno 0.

Quarters: 22-25; 40-35; 60-58, 80-73.

Second Game

AMP-ATENEO 67—Oreta 13, Membrere 11, Gatumbato 10, Espinas 9, Mendoza 7, Alfad 7, Intal 3, Kramer 3, Mesina 2, Castro 1, Bugia 1.

TOYOTA OTIS-LETRAN 57—Macapagal 9, Coronel 8, Andaya 8, Alcaraz 6, Enrile 6, Daa 5, Abadia 5, Aban 5, Pinera 3, Aldave 2, Dula 0, Bautista 0.

Quarters: 16-19; 23-28; 45-40; 67-57.

DOJ to appeal injunction . . .

From page A25

the decision of Judge Romulo Lopez of the Manila Regional Trial Court branch 34 to grant an injunction against the Department of Justice and the Bureau of Immigration.

"You cannot be a Filipino simply because of a court injunction," Gonzalez said.

"The court can declare somebody a Filipino only if there is a naturalization petition. We will appeal this," he added.

In a decision dated last Jan. 6, Judge Lopez said the DOJ and the BI cannot "denationalize (Taulava) on the basis of inconclusive pieces of evidence which were gathered without affording him his day in court."

Lopez said the DOJ and the BI had no authority or jurisdiction to cancel the recognition of Filipino citizenship issued to Taulava four years ago.

Taulava was one of the so-called "Fil-shams" or Philippine Basketball Association players who allegedly faked their citizenship papers.

In October, Gonzalez ordered the BI to deport the other five—Red Bull's Davonn Harp, Jon Ordonio and Mick Pennisi, Rudy Hatfield of Coca-Cola, and Alex Crisano of Barangay Ginebra—after the DOJ ruled that they had faked their citizenship.

Despite this development, Philippine Basketball Association commissioner Noli Eala said Wednesday the league is not lifting the suspension imposed on Taulava and the five other Fil-foreign players in the wake of the DOJ ruling.

Gonzalez had also ordered Taulava's deportation but the deportation proceedings against him were "held in abeyance unless and until" the injunction issued by the Manila court was lifted.

Vegas oddsmakers pick Pacquiao

From page A25

forcing organizers to scrap the scheduled Feb. 26 rematch against Pacquiao.

The sun shone bright here yesterday for the first time since New Year but Pacquiao, after a regular morning jog, skipped gym work to attend the press conference.

"We resume tomorrow, and it will be a long, hard grind all the way," Roach said.

The five-foot-eight Morales has a 47-2 record with 34 knockouts.

The five-foot-six Pacquiao, 39-2-2- with 30 knockouts, is a two-time world champion.

They share equal 69-percent knockout credits.

No official title will be at stake but Top Rank and M&M Sports, which will present the card in association with MGM Grand, called the 12-round bout the "world super featherweight championship."

Tickets have been priced at $400, $300, $200, $125 and $75.

That is my wish

SPECTATOR

Al S. Mendoza

I AM at a loss for words to describe Michael Schumacher's gesture donating $10 million to the tsunami victims in several South Asian countries and some African nations. All I can say is, bravo!

The worst nature-spawned disaster of all time triggered by an earthquake in the Indian Ocean that claimed more than 150,000 lives is drawing the best out of our world athletes—at least several of them, and counting. Include non-athletes, too.

With that amount, Schumacher, who won an unprecedented seventh Formula One crown last year (he also won in 1994-1995, 2000-2001-2002-2003), definitely made more than a statement. On record, his $10-million donation is the biggest ever by any single individual. If you can't put your hands together by way of acknowledging Schumi's spectacular act, something's wrong with you, brother.

Where are the likes of Gates, Rockefeller, Walton, Trump and other so-called billionaires in our midst, including the Bolkiahs of Brunei and the royalty of Europe like Queen Elizabeth? Maybe they've done their own donating already—secretly, that is?

That is my wish.

And how about the Hollywood celebrities, like Steven Spielberg, the wealthiest director of all time, or Tom Hanks, the world's most bankable actor today? Have they done their own thing?

That is my wish.

And how about the world's great bands, like Linkin' Park, Aerosmith, U2 or even The Rolling Stones and Wings?

I miss George Harrison, the quiet Beatle, who, when he was still around, did a fund-raising concert for the poor of Bangladesh. Will Sir Paul McCartney and Sir Mick Jagger also spearhead a similar move that would assemble the best that the music world has at the moment?

That is my wish.

Calling on the Three Tenors—Pavarotti, Domingo and Carreras. How about a concert at The Parthenon, if not at the London Palladium, or even at Carnegie Hall?

That is my wish.

Several NBA players, among them Kobe Bryant, have done their own share, allocating $1,000 for every point they scored in an NBA game last week as a donation to the tsunami victims.

Has Michael Jordan, the now-retired greatest NBA player ever, done his own move? Secretly also?

That is my wish.

I don't know if our own PBA players and coaches, not to mention the entire PBA officialdom, have done their own donating?

That is my wish.

Bill Clinton has said he was looking at $3 billion as his dream aim in throwing his support behind the world's biggest alms-gathering action ever. I'm pretty sure Clinton, one of America's most charismatic leaders, can do it.

That is my wish.

Just last Monday, Jan. 10, Carlos Moya of Spain did his own thing. The 1998 French Open champion donated his purse of $52,000 after beating Thailand's Paradorn Srichapan for the Chennai Open title in Madras, India.

Moya's victory was without drama.

Down 2-5 in the third and final set, Moya rallied mightily to defeat Srichapan, 3-6, 6-4, 7-6 (5), and become the first player to win the hardcourt tune-up for the Australian Open in consecutive years. Will the other big guns of tennis like Roger Federer, Andy Roddick and Andre Agassi follow suit?

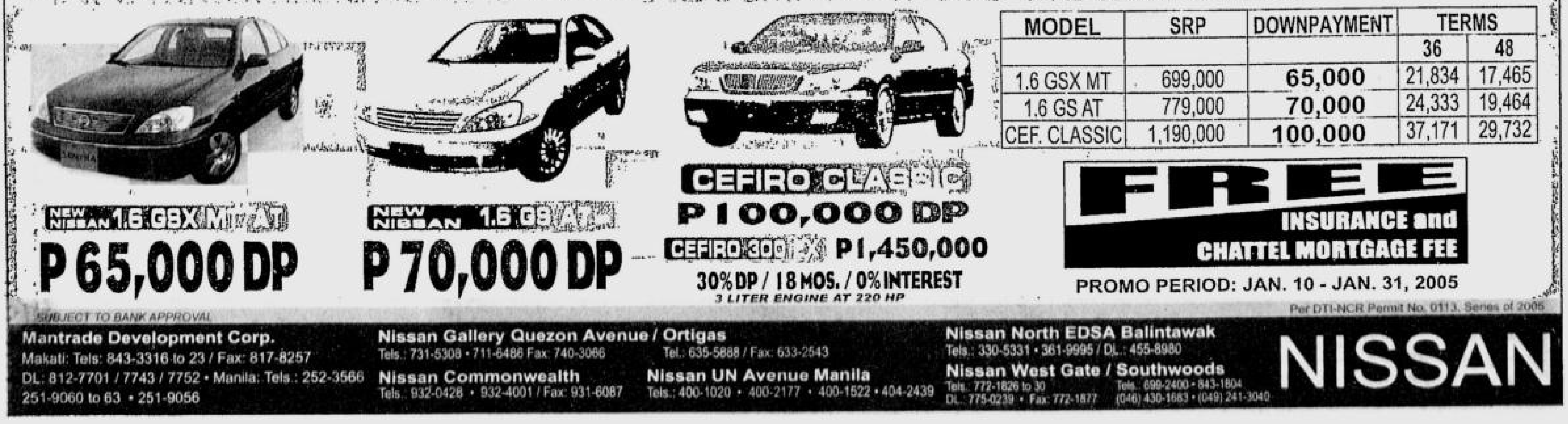
That is my wish.

And, finally, will our own moneyed class from Forbes Park, Ayala Alabang and other plush villages and elite condos pitch in, too—if they haven't done it yet?

That is my wish.

***

FASTBREAK. Nice to know that STAR Sports will air live the Australian Open Jan. 17-30. Defending champion Roger Federer, who became the first man to win three Grand Slam (the Wimbledon and US Open being the other two) events last year since Mats Wilander did it in 1988, is among 200 entries. Federer remains in peak form as he has won 21 straight matches and has not dropped a finals match since October 2003. The STAR Sports special should be a real treat. I will never miss it.



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NISSAN

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In-form Villaroman wrests two-shot lead

By Musong R. Castillo

DISPLAYING unmatched brilliance around the greens, Carmelette Villaroman submitted an even-par 71 yesterday to wrest a two-stroke lead over defending champion Frances Bondad and two others going into the final 18 holes of the Smart Gold Philippine Ladies Amateur Open.

The 28-year-old former champion highlighted her 37-34 round with a number of excellent par saves for a 145 total, three-over at a Manila Golf layout that played more difficult because of its hardened, sun-scorched fairways.

Three-way tie for second

Bondad wrestled with her putter all day, missing putts from as close as 18 inches to sign for a 76 and a 147 total like Ji Yeon Woo of Korea and World Amateur veteran Jayvie Agojo, who checked in with 72s.

Suteera Chanachai of Thailand churned out a 74 for 149 and solo fifth.

Tiny Aileen Rose Yao, the former jungolf wonder who started the day a shot behind Bondad, struggled in the back nine for a 78 and 150, just one ahead of Crystal Faith Superal, who also had a 78.

Anya Tanpinco carded a 75 for 152, with the highly touted Nontaya Srisawang of Thailand improving slightly with a 76 for 154.

BONDAD: Pulled down by six bogeys.

Lora Roberto had a 79 for 156 with Lina de Guzman (78), Singapore's Christabel Goh (84) and 14-year-old Debbie de Villa (77) tied for ninth at 157.

Last-hole birdie

Villaroman, who won here as a teenager in 1993, capped her round with a 12-foot sidehill putt for birdie on the 18th that put her in position for another big win after earlier triumphs in the Asian Ladies and the Samsung tournaments last year.

"I'm hitting it shorter (compared with 1993), but my putting is working well," said the Callaway-backed Villaroman, who shot three birdies and the same number of bogeys.

She rescued par from the sand trap on Nos. 10 and 11 and on the par-5 15th after a misjudged layup. She nailed a 15-foot putt for par on the 440-yard par-4 17th, which took her all of three shots to reach.

Six-bogey round

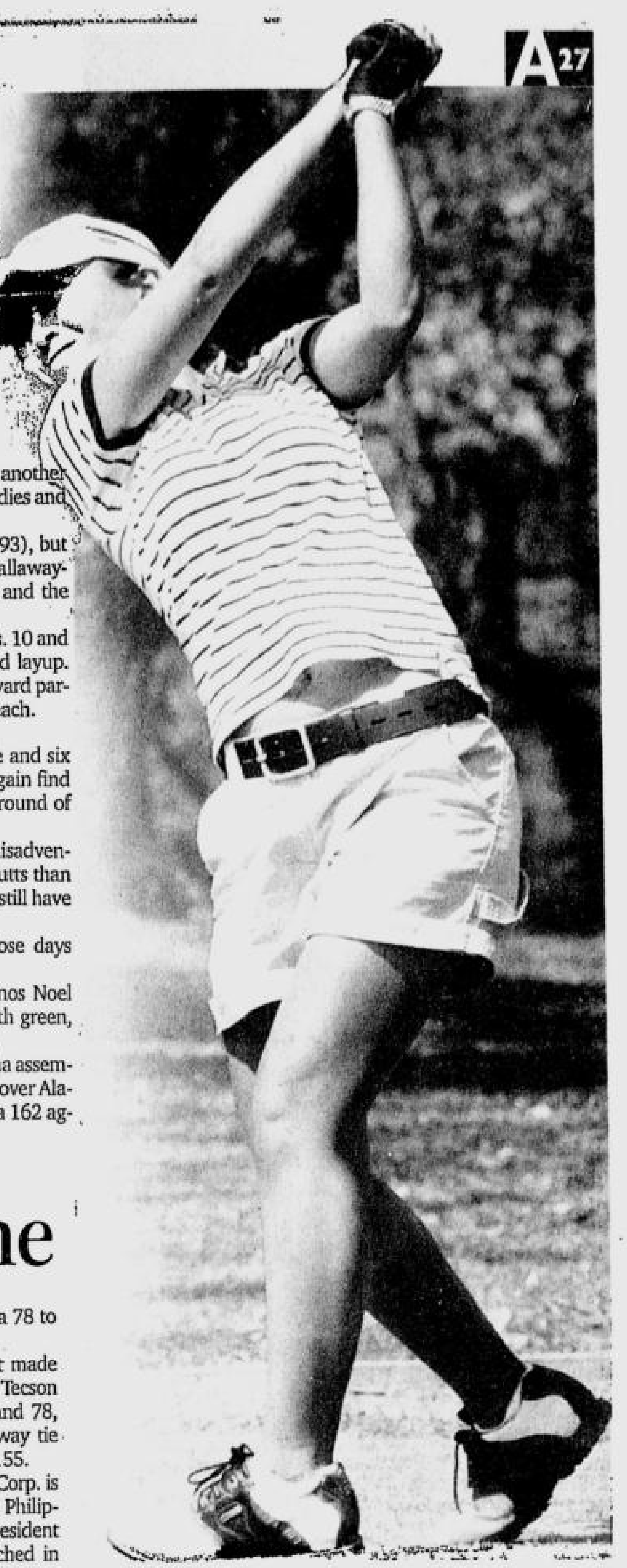
Bondad, meanwhile, had only one birdie and six bogeys, describing her game as "crap," to again find herself out of the lead going into the final round of her repeat bid.

"I'm over it now," Bondad said of her misadventures. "I'm more amused at missing those putts than anything else. As long as I'm not 15 down, I still have a shot (at winning again)."

"I'm not perfect. Today was one of those days where it did not work out."

The Australian-based daughter of Filipinos Noel and Juliet had her final blunder on the 18th green, when she muffed an 18-inch putt for birdie.

In class A action, Vinice Godio of Sta. Elena assembled a 77 for 159 to take a three-stroke lead over Alabang's Geleen Handog, who shot an 80 for a 162 aggregate.


BACK AT THE HELM: Carmelette Villaroman hits her tee shot on No. 15.
ROMY HOMILLADA

Superal cinch for title; 2 Koreans shine

SOUTH Korea's Cho Min Gyu and Kim Ha Neul sparkled with 71s yesterday to take top spot in their respective divisions even as the Philippines' Wolen Juan Superal virtually ruled his class in the Samsung Philippine International Junior golf championship.

Cho toured the par-72, 6,674-yard Wack Wack Golf and Country Club's East course from the blue tees with nines of 37-34 to go with his first-day 75 for 146.

That gave Cho a commanding nine-shot lead over the Philippines' Justin Limjap in the boys' 15-17 Class A division. Limjap shot 76 for 155.

Kim matched Cho's nines also from the blue tees and will start today's final round at 155, a stroke ahead of the Philippines' Lovelynn Guio Guio.

Superal shot another 76 for 152 to take a huge 15-stroke lead in the boys' 11-12 Class C.

Yu Jun Hyung, another South Korean, came up with a 73 for 150 to dislodge the Philippines' John Kier Abdon by one shot in the boys' Class B.

Hong Kong's Tiffany Chan Tsz Ching shot a 77 to retain the girls' 12-under lead with 150. The Philippines' Princess Mary Superal trails her by six at 156 after an 81.

Carlos Fabregas, the first-round leader in the boys' Class A with a 74, collapsed with a 91 for 165 and virtually kissed his bid for the Class A crown goodbye.

Singapore's Chua Sheam Yuhao sparkled with a 73 and Kim Leung Kwan Jermiah struggled with a 78 to tie for the Class D lead at 148.

Thailand's Chavit Buraparat made a 74, and the Philippines' Jenz Tecson and Oliver Gan scored a 76 and 78, respectively, to forge a three-way tie for the special division lead at 155.

Samsung Electronics Phils. Corp. is the title sponsor of the event Philippine Junior Golf Federation president Edgardo "Boy" Cantada launched in 1998 to give the region's top juniors an additional tournament.

SPORTSWATCH

3rd AIM Masters golf fires off today

ALL ROADS lead to the Alabang Golf and Country Club today for the 3rd AIM Masters Golf Tournament where a Honda Jazz courtesy of Honda Cars Makati Inc. awaits the first hole-in-one winner. AIM Alumni golfers, friends and family gather together for this annual golf event and fund raiser in an atmosphere of lifelong fellowship and friendly competition. Tee time is at 6 a.m. with the presentation of awards and raffle following after lunch at the Alabang Country Club Ballroom. For inquiries, call 750-6575 or 750-1010 locals 210-32106. Sponsors include Smart, Petron, DPC Yellow Pages, Security Bank and Nestle.

Sports Plus airs World Poker Tour

SPORTS Plus will broadcast the World Poker Tour starting today at 7 p.m. as five professional gamblers and one retired businessman fight it out to get a piece of the $1.5-million pot at stake in the Bellagio Five Diamond World Poker Classic. The first season of the WPT will have 13 episodes and will be aired by Sports Plus on channel 45 for Sky Cable, channel 21 for Home cable and channel 42 for Destiny cable subscribers.

70 matches spice up 4-cock derby

MORE than 70 heart-pounding matches will spice up another exciting 4-cock derby today at the air-conditioned Pasay City Cockpit, with Sagupaan Complexor 3000, Sagupaan B-50 Forten and Sagupaan Mite Free as sponsors. At stake is a guaranteed prize of P400,000 with an entry fee of P10,000. To host the event is the Pasay Civic Group headed by Cora Malanyaon. Malanyaon said that part of the derby's proceeds will be donated to the Rep. Connie Dy Foundation. For other inquiries, call 843-1890, 843-1746 and 816-6750. Meanwhile, the third edition of "Pasay Cockpit Cockers Association (PCCA) 4-Cock Derby" unfolds on Jan. 21 with at least 60 fights on tap.

PCC hosts Fastest Kill Challenge

THE FASTEST Kill Challenge One-Cock Ulutan will be staged at Pasay City Cockpit beginning on Sunday until Wednesday. The event stakes a guaranteed prize of P100,000 for an entry fee of 500 every Sunday. A smaller prize of P25,000 is up for grabs every Monday and Tuesday, but entry fee is only P100. During Wednesdays, the guaranteed prize is P50,000 with a P300 entry fee. Pit managers Oscar Gonzales, Eric dela Rosa and Butchoy Olano said the format is highly accepted by small-time cockers and breeders. During the New Year Superfights Fastest Kill event last Wednesday, 404 entries competed. Arnel Geronga won the top prize, a brand-new owner-type jeep, after his entry won in 12 seconds flat.

RACING TIPS

AT SLLP BY MR. 999

Race 1—1. Archer 2. Saving Grace 3. He's A Balong 4. Bold Lucky
Race 2—1. Ocean Wings 2. Mini Skirt 3. Jungle King 4. Chances Are
Race 3—1. En Carta 2. Trouble Master 3. Kaori Yoks 4. Great Tower
Race 4—1. Brutus 2. Scarlet Velvet 3. Class Action 4. Bold Water/Mister Wonderful
Race 5—1. Coolmore 2. Sakura Ijhay 3. Macho Guwapito 4. Blitzkrieg 5. Zarafun Mo
Race 6—1. Beatitudes 2. Mystika 3. Voice of Destiny 4. Premiere Event
Race 7—1. Habagat 2. Valiente 3. Boogie Shoes
Race 8—1. Earth Angel 2. He's Splendid 3. Dalidali 4. Freedom Bell
Race 9—1. Naughty 2. Well Noted 3. Ground Wave 4. Soaring Free 5. Sovereign Queen 6. King Yoji

Lady Pirates enhance s'final bid

LYCEUM won back-to-back matches for the first time, nipping gritty San Sebastian, 25-16, 27-25, 25-23, yesterday to enhance its bid for the fourth and last semifinal berth in the Shakey's V-League at the Rizal Coliseum.

It was the fourth victory against the same number of losses for the Lady Pirates who broke out of a tie with idle Letran to seize solo fourth heading into the crucial phase of the double-round eliminations.

Center spiker Michelle Laborte sizzled with 20 points, including 16 on attacks to power Lyceum in the one-hour, 17-minute match.

GAMES SUNDAY
(*Rizal Coliseum*)
1 p.m.—Far Eastern vs Letran
3 p.m.—PSC vs Santo Tomas

The loss was the eighth in nine games for the also-ran Lady Stags. But they didn't bow out without a fight.

The Lady Stags appeared ready to extend the match to another set when they seized leads of 18-15, 19-16 and 20-17 before fizzling out in the face of the Lady Pirates' fiery windup.

Lyceum went into the game inspired by its come-from-behind 21-25, 22-25, 25-21, 25-16, 15-12 victory over Far Eastern last Sunday.

With Cristina Salak and Jenny Rose Garcia supporting Laborte offensively, Lyceum outscored San Sebastian, 7-3, to grab a 24-23 lead. Laborte also shone on the defensive end, scoring four points on blocks to emerge the runaway best player of the game.

"We hope to get better as we step up our bid for the semis," said Lyceum coach Emil Lontoc.

Musong R. Castillo

Looking forward to the new PSC leadership

CLEAN LIVING

Manolo R. Iñigo

SPORTS fans have much to look forward to in 2005 not only because the country will again host the multi-nation Southeast Asian Games but also because it is the year when President Macapagal-Arroyo will name a new chair to run the Philippine Sports Commission.

Being a sports fan myself, I suppose I can ask the new PSC leadership to heed the popular clamor for change and, as a taxpayer, I can ask PSC officials not to join (at government expense) any Philippine delegation to international and regional meets such as the Olympics, Asian and Southeast Asian Games. The PSC has no personality in the International Olympic Committee and since POC officials, who are recognized by the IOC, are already present at these sporting meets, there's no need for PSC officials to be there.

As former POC president Julian Malonso said, "The PSC should not involve itself with international participation. Participation in international competitions is the concern of the Philippine Olympic Committee and the National Sports Associations. If the Philippine Sports Commission does not involve itself in international competitions, it cannot be blamed for failures."

Also considered vital for the PSC's survival, continued growth and progress are:

1. PSC appointees should be men and women of good moral character with a long experience in sports. They should serve as role models for the other government agencies to follow.

2. PSC officials should work hard for the welfare of the athletes and their coaches at all times; they should be honest, transparent and approachable, avoiding the bureaucratic red tape in its various departments.

3. The PSC should stop graft and corruption, sexual harassment, drug abuse and technical smuggling. PSC officials should maintain desirable values and ethics of sports.

4. The PSC should encourage and promote a mass-based sports program in both the public and private sectors, starting at the barangay level. It should combine efforts with the POC in all its projects.

***

JUST ASKING. I hope newly appointed Philippine Sports Commission OIC (officer in charge) William "Butch" Ramirez was not misquoted when he decried recently the substandard conditions of the living quarters of the national athletes at the Philsports and Rizal Memorial Sports Complex.

"How long have you been this way," asked PSC commissioner Ramirez in his talk with the athletes in badminton, boxing, diving, rowing, softball, sepak takraw and track and field during a surprise visit at their quarters. Ramirez found the athletes' living conditions appalling, with some of the beds not having mattresses, the plumbing in the toilets not functioning well and the rooms poorly ventilated.

There is no question that Ramirez is concerned with the welfare of the athletes, but still many are asking: Why did he notice the athletes' substandard living conditions only now? What has he been doing as PSC commissioner in the last four years or so?

However, I must commend Ramirez for not having been charged with any wrongdoing since he became PSC commissioner. And, most of all, he never traveled at taxpayers' expense.

***

BULACAN COCKERS WIN. In the 13th staging of the recent Bulacan-Cavite Hackfight series at the well-maintained Cavite Coliseum in Bacoor, the visiting Bulacan cockers, headed by human rights lawyer Pete Principe, beat Cavite's pride by six matches.

"I wish to thank Sen. Bong Revilla and his father, former Sen. Ramon Revilla Sr., for their hospitality and warm welcome," said a beaming Principe after the well-attended hackfights. "We intend to come back next year and renew our goodwill series."

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Cool Hewitt strolls to semis

SYDNEY—Australia's Lleyton Hewitt kept his cool on a blistering hot summer's day to reach the semifinals of the Sydney International on Thursday while his main rivals all melted.

The world number 3 breezed into the last four of the Australian Open warm-up event with a 6-1 7-6 win over Swede Thomas Johansson to be the last remaining seed in the men's draw.

Fourth seed Romanian Andrei Pavel, Spanish fifth seed Feliciano Lopez and Taylor Dent, the big-serving American seeded eighth, all succumbed to lower ranked opponents as the temperature at Sydney's Olympic tennis center soared to 42 degrees Celsius (107.60F).

Pavel fell to little-known Czech qualifier Ivo Minar, 2-6 7-6 6-4, while Lopez succumbed to Radek Stepanek, 6-3 6-2.

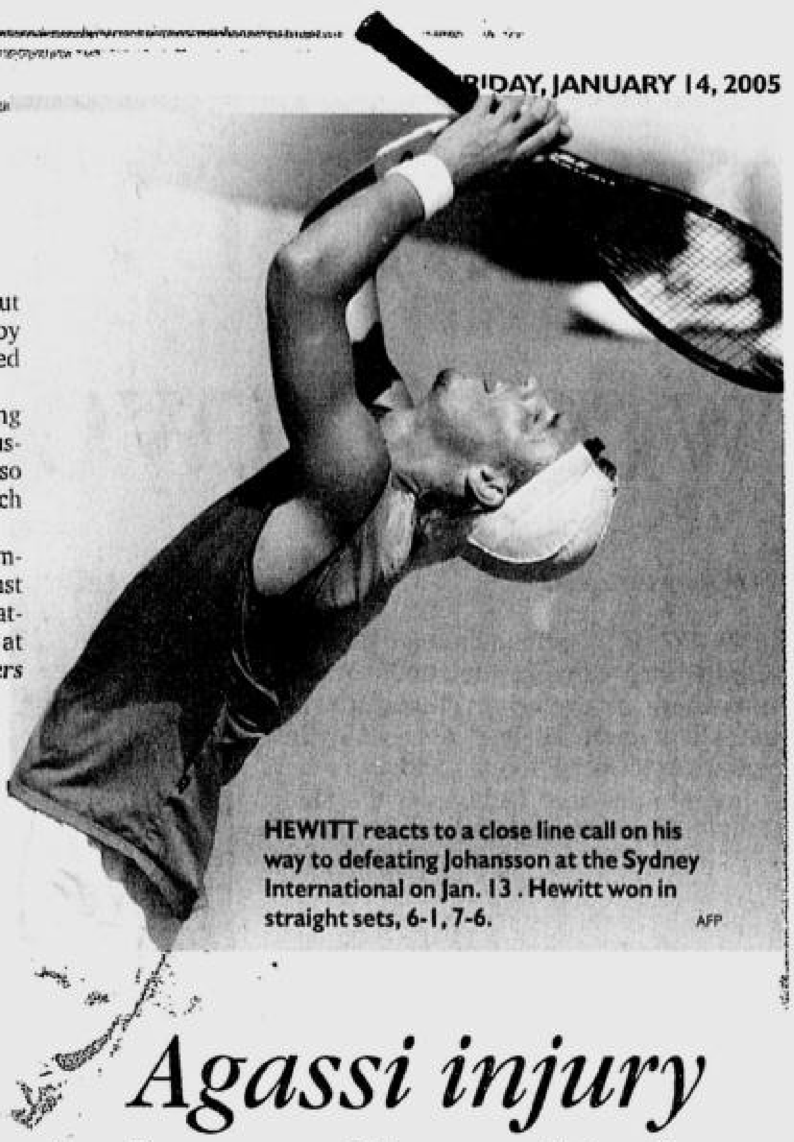
Dent, who beat Hewitt in last week's Australian hardcourt championships, failed to finish his quarterfinal with Max Mirnyi of Belarus, quitting halfway through the first set after feeling ill.

"I was feeling a little bit light-headed, dizzy and my energy was going pretty fast," Dent said.

"I saw the doctor and told him what was happening. He said just try and stay out there.., but it was getting worse minute by minute." The carnage was not just restricted to the men's singles.

India's Leander Paes twisted his foot during a doubles match and is in doubt for the Australian Open while Czech Tomas Berdych also quit the doubles after suffering a stomach problem.

In the women's draw, Russia's world number 13 Nadia Petrova quit her match against Chinese amateur Peng Shuai because of heatstroke. The fifth seed was trailing, 6-3 4-2, at the time. *Reuters*



HEWITT reacts to a close line call on his way to defeating Johansson at the Sydney International on Jan. 13 . Hewitt won in straight sets, 6-1, 7-6. AFP

Federer, Davenport top seeds

MELBOURNE, Australia — Roger Federer had no peer in 2004 and was duly seeded No. 1 for the Australian Open, the opening major of the season.

Federer won the Australian title last year and will be defending a Grand Slam title for only the second time when he returns to Melbourne Park next week in a men's draw that contains all of the top 20-ranked players.

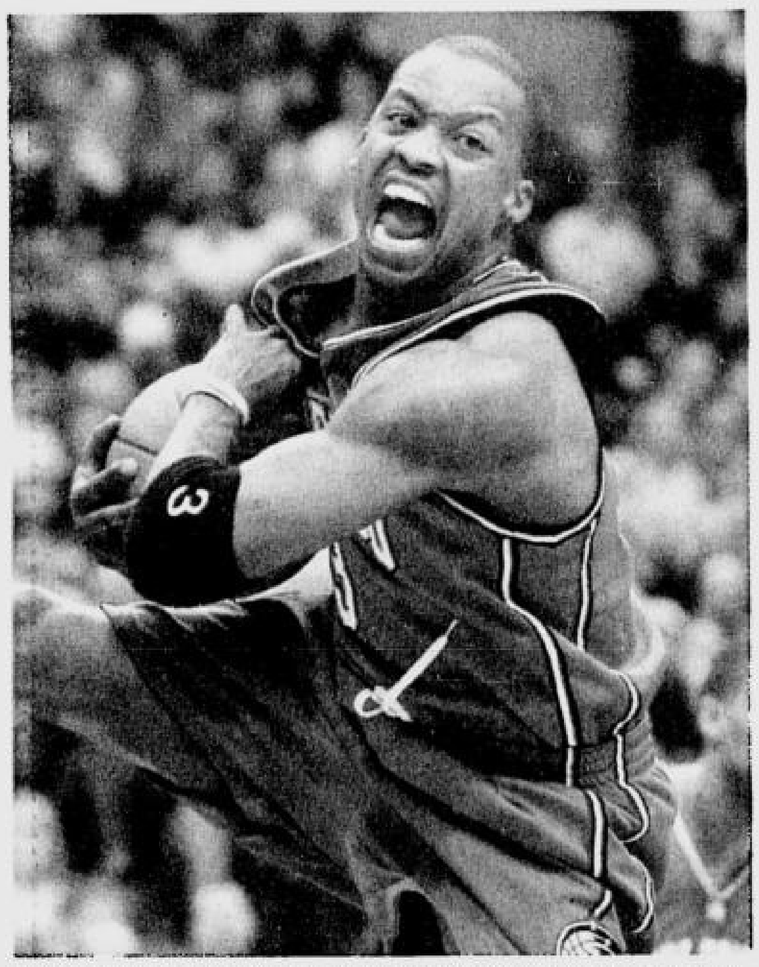
Second-ranked Andy Roddick was seeded No. 2, with No. 3 Lleyton Hewitt seeded third, Marat Safin at No. 4, Carlos Moya at No. 5, Guillermo Coria at No. 6, Tim Henman at No. 7, Andre Agassi at No. 8 and so on according to rankings.

But that could change, with four-time champion Agassi injuring his hip and retiring from an exhibition tournament about the same time the list of seeded players was being announced Thursday.

Agassi was to have an MRI scan on his right hip to determine the extent of the damage and was expected to leave a decision about playing at the Australian Open until the weekend.

Lindsay Davenport was seeded No. 1 in the women's draw, which is missing last year's Belgian finalists Justin Henin-Hardenne and Kim Clijsters, and Jennifer Capriati, the back-to-back champion at Melbourne Park in 2001 and 2002. *AP*

Jazz shade Suns; Heat blow hot vs Warriors



MAGIC'S Steve Francis pulls down a rebound with authority against the Timberwolves Wednesday in Minneapolis. Orlando won, 87-80. AP

NEW YORK—Mehmet Okur scored 21 points as the host Utah Jazz upset the Phoenix Suns, 115-108, Wednesday, sending the NBA's top team to only its fifth loss of the season.

Okur, whose game-winning shot helped the Jazz beat the San Antonio Spurs Monday to snap a nine-game losing skid, added a season-high 17 rebounds and 10 assists. He received plenty of assistance with Utah getting double-figure efforts from six players.

After defeating the Miami Heat in a clash of conference leaders Tuesday, the high-scoring Suns appeared to lack energy late in the contest as the Jazz brought Phoenix's seven-game winning run to an end.

Quentin Richardson had 24 points for the Suns while Steve Nash contributed a double-double in a losing cause with 22 points and 11 assists.

In Denver, Kenyon Martin notched 18 points and Carmelo Anthony 17 as the Nuggets downed the Los Angeles Lakers, 95-83, in Kobe Bryant's first appearance in Colorado since sexual assault charges against the All-Star were dropped.

Bryant said the game was "not a big deal" but Denver fans booed him during introductions and every time he touched the ball.

The Lakers guard, who picked up 42 points the last time the teams met in Los Angeles on Jan. 2, was held to 16 points, seven assists and five rebounds this time round.

In Dallas, Tracy McGrady recorded 30 points and 11 assists to power the Houston Rockets to a 124-114 triumph over the Mavericks.

In Oakland, Shaquille O'Neal and Udonis Haslem produced double-doubles to spark the Miami Heat to a 98-91 victory over the Golden State Warriors. O'Neal seized 26 points and 12 rebounds while Haslem added 22 points and 10 rebounds. *AP*

Complete results: Toronto 104, Boston 93; Washington 104, Portland 100; Detroit 90, New Orleans 76; Orlando 87, Minnesota 80; San Antonio 94, Milwaukee 79; Chicago 110, Philadelphia 78; Denver 95, LA Lakers 83; Houston 124, Dallas 114; Utah 115, Phoenix 108; LA Clippers 103, Seattle 92; Miami 98, Golden State 91. AP

Agassi injury hogs limelight

MELBOURNE—An injury to Andre Agassi, which could force the American to miss next week's Australian Open, overshadowed day two of the Kooyong Classic on Thursday.

Four-time champion at the Melbourne Park Grand Slam, Agassi suffered a hip flexor injury in his match against fellow American Andy Roddick, and was forced to pull out of the eight-man warm-up event while trailing 6-5 in the first set.

His retirement handed Roddick a place in Saturday's final against either world number one Roger Federer or Briton Tim Henman.

The 34-year-old Agassi, seeded eighth for next week's Open, said it was not the same injury that caused him to miss several tournaments, including Wimbledon, last year.

"I didn't know if it was one of those just quick feelings you get if you don't stretch right to a ball and then it goes away, but then when I sat down on the changeover and I stood up to go, I had a hard time lifting my leg to stand up."

Agassi said he would have an MRI scan to reveal the extent of the damage, and that he could be forced to miss the event for the second time in four years.

In 2002, the American suffered a wrist injury in the final at Kooyong against Pete Sampras, and subsequently missed the year's first Grand Slam event.

In the day's other matches between day-one losers, former Wimbledon runner-up David Nalbandian won the battle of the Argentines as he beat Gaston Gaudio, 6-3 6-1, and Olympic champion Nicolas Massu of Chile beat Croatian Ivan Ljubicić, 6-4 6-4.

Federer takes on Henman on Friday for the right to meet Roddick in the final. *Reuters*

Serena unveils new outfit

MELBOURNE, Australia—Serena Williams Thursday unveiled her latest outfit and intentions to challenge for the Australian Open crown at next week's tennis Grand Slam.

Williams, who dominated women's tennis with five Grand Slams in 2002-03 including the 2003 Australian Open, said she was fighting fit after overcoming an abdominal strain and a knee problem which dropped her ranking to seventh—her lowest since 1998.

Known for some outlandish tennis fashion statements including a black catsuit, her latest gear includes a dress that comes apart to reveal shorts and a tight-fitting tank top. And the knee-high boots that first appeared at last year's US Open are back. Only this time they have changed from black patent leather to lime green with mesh panels down the side. *AFP*

Big Easy shares billing with Big Wiesy

HONOLULU—Ernie Els has played before the largest galleries this week at the Sony Open, in part because he is trying to become the first player in its 40-year history to win three straight times.

And also because the Big Easy has been hanging around the Big Wiesy.

In the first full-field event, with the No. 1 player (Vijay Singh) at Waialae Country Club for the first time, 15-year-old Michelle Wie remains the star attraction as she pursues history of her own. She will try to become the first woman to make the cut on the PGA Tour since Babe Zaharias in the 1945 Tucson Open.

Impossible?

A year ago, Wie shot 68 in the second round—the lowest score by a female competing against men—and finished at even-par 140 to miss the cut by one shot.

"To me, the two stories are: Can Ernie win three in a row? And Michelle Wie, how is she going to play?" David Toms said Wednesday. "I think it's good for this golf tournament."

WIE: Going up against the biggies. AP

It might be a little tougher for Wie this time around.

She now has a performance to measure herself against. And while expectations are high, so is the rough. Add in some heavy rain in recent weeks, and Waialae Country Club is playing every bit of its 6,453 meters.

Wie headed to the practice range late Wednesday afternoon, searching for a spot between Zach Johnson and Jesper Parnevik as she tried to control her driver.

She was to tee off Thursday morning, playing with 31-year-old Brett Wetterich and 23-year-old Matt Davidson, who graduated from Furman last year and will be playing his first PGA Tour event.

Els wasn't willing to offer any predictions, only that he is no less astonished by her game.

"It's amazing what she is doing—a 15-year-old girl playing in a PGA Tour event," Els said. "She's doing a hell of a job, and she believes she can play with us, which is great. I think from last year to this year, I could see her developing as a person now."

Els also played a practice round last year, fitting since Wie was dubbed the "Big Wiesy" as a 12-year-old when Tom Lehman compared her swing favorably with Els. *AFP*

New venues for two SEAG competitions

WOMEN'S football has been moved to Marikina and mountain bike and cycling's road races to Cebu for the Southeast Asian Games the country will stage in several venues on Nov. 27 to Dec. 5.

The Philippine SEAG Organizing Committee moved women's football from the Philsports in Pasig after the city government of Marikina promised to finance the staging of the event on its own.

With the transfer of mountain bike and road races from Subic,

Cebu/Mandaue will now host seven events after earlier getting sepak takraw, pencak silat, taekwondo, dancesport, karatedo and judo.

Canoe-kayak, sailing, rowing and traditional boat race may also be held in one venue to maximize the use of equipment.

Philsoc officials said these sports need a multimillion-peso four-lane starting gate which can be installed at the La Mesa dam.

That leaves Subic with only archery and sailing to host so far.

Aside from Metro Manila, the other SEAG site is Bacolod City which is hosting boxing, men's football, weightlifting, volleyball and beach volleyball.

Meanwhile, the Philippine Sports Commission is set to conduct a dialogue with heads of the 44 national sports associations today regarding their financial requests. *Marc Anthony Reyes*

World arnis qualifying tilt under way in Cebu

CEBU CITY—The World Eskrima Kali Arnis Federation and the Cebu City Sports Commission will hold the Sinulog International Arnis Championships, a world championship qualifying event, starting at noon today at the Elizabeth Mall here.

More than 100 *eskrimadors* from South Korea, Japan, Switzerland and the United States are vying for top honors in 32 individual categories, including 12 in the open-advance division.

Philippine Navy fighters are highly favored in the open advance division while University of San Carlos, University of the Visayas and University of Cebu are among the top picks in the collegiate division.

Gracing the affair are Cebu City councilor Jack Jakosalem, eBusiness Services Inc. Cebu branch head Jenny Vi Cortes and Wekaf chair emeritus Dionisio Cañete.

TOP SKATER
Michelle Kwan works out for the US Figure Skating Championship Wednesday in Portland. AP

King files $2.5 billion lawsuit against ESPN

FORT LAUDERDALE, Florida—Flamboyant fight promoter Don King Wednesday filed a $2.5 billion lawsuit against ESPN, claiming he was defamed by a program on the cable sports television network.

King's lawyer, Willie Gary, called the case "one of the worst examples of reckless broadcast journalism and blatant disregard for the truth." The suit was filed in state circuit court in Broward County, Florida, against ESPN, ABC Cable Networks and their parent company, Disney, as well as the Florida cable television carrier Advocate Communications.

The suit claims that a SportsCentury program that aired in May accused King of being "a snake oil salesman and a shameless huckster."

It also claimed King underpaid Muhammad Ali by $1.2 million.

King, who was convicted in a 1967 beating death and acquitted of another murder 13 years earlier, also was portrayed on the show as someone who "killed not once but twice." According to the lawsuit, the defendants "broadcast statements that intentionally and recklessly portray Don King in a false light." "I have a lot of respect for freedom of speech and freedom of press in America," said King, who has spent much of his legendary career in a courtroom. "It's a constitutional right. But the press does not have the right to slant and twist the truth to create a negative picture." *AFP*

Foxx tops his own...

From page A32

place in the Oscar Best Supporting Actor race when the Academy's nominations are announced late this month.

The British actor is one of SAG's youngest nominees ever. Depp, Highmore and the rest of the cast of "Neverland" are also in the running for best ensemble performance in a motion picture.

Also snubbed

Also making it as nominees in the SAG derby but not in the lists of other awards organizations are two veteran thespians, Cloris Leachman and James Garner. Leachman snagged a well-deserved Best Supporting Actress nomination for the Adam Sandler comedy "Spanglish." Garner clinched his Best Supporting Actor kudos for "The Notebook," a weeper movie earlier bandied about as an award contender but was all but forgotten until this SAG recognition. The actor was also announced as the recipient of SAG's 41st annual Life Achievement Award.

Martin Scorsese's "The Aviator" showed that it was still a contender with citations for the performances of Leonardo DiCaprio, Cate Blanchett and the entire cast.

Don Cheadle ("Hotel Rwanda," whose cast was also cited), completes Foxx's list of rivals for the Best Actor trophy.

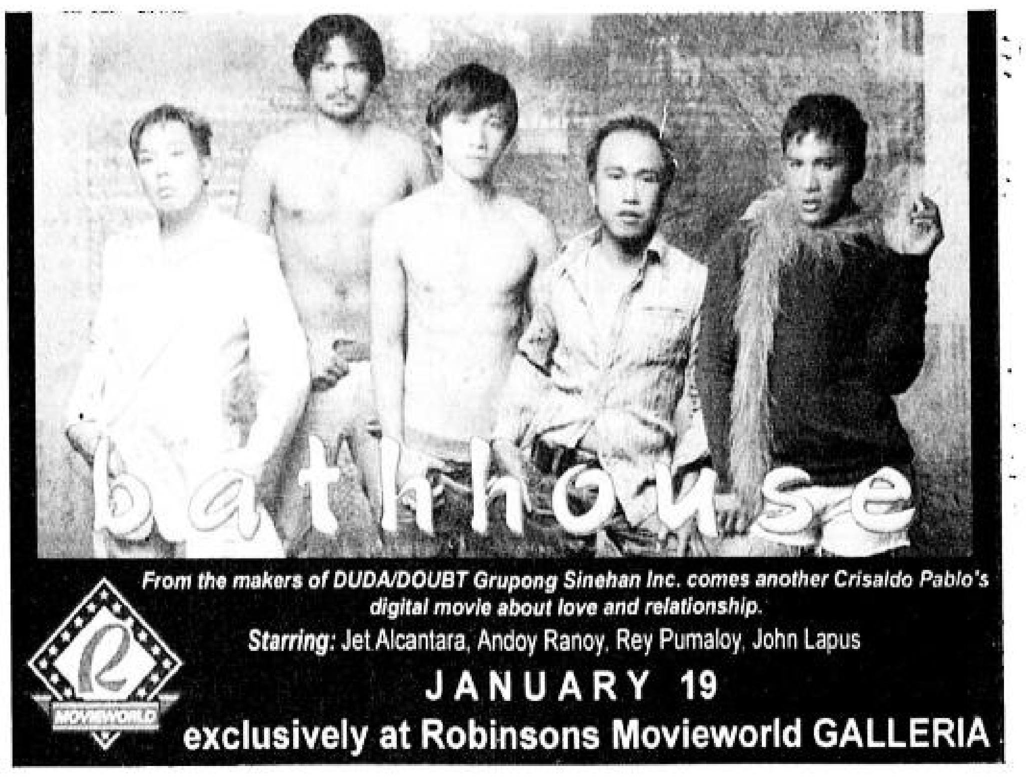
Swank's fellow aspirants for Best Actress honors are from small but well-praised films: Imelda Staunton (who leads the pack with numerous wins already for "Vera Drake"), Kate Winslet ("Eternal Sunshine of the Spotless Mind"), Annette Bening ("Being Julia") and Catalina Sandino Moreno ("Maria Full of Grace").

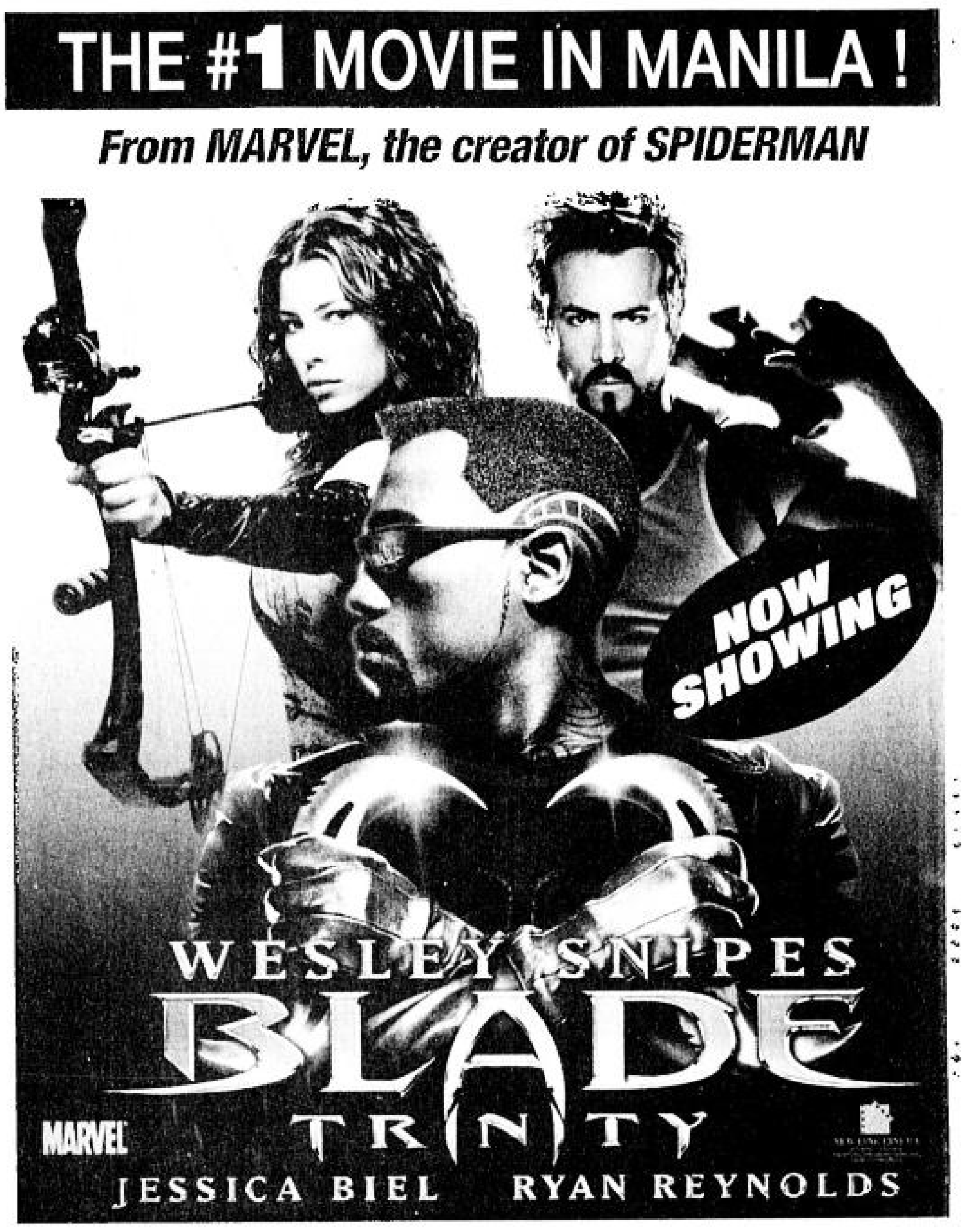
In the TV acting categories, HBO dominated the field as usual. "The Sopranos" led the shows with four nominations, while "Will & Grace" and "Everybody Loves Raymond" won three nods each. Patricia Heaton scored with three nods for Best Actress in a Comedy Series and as a cast member, Best Ensemble in a Comedy Series (both for "Raymond") and Best Actress in a TV movie or miniseries ("Neil Simon's The Goodbye Girl").

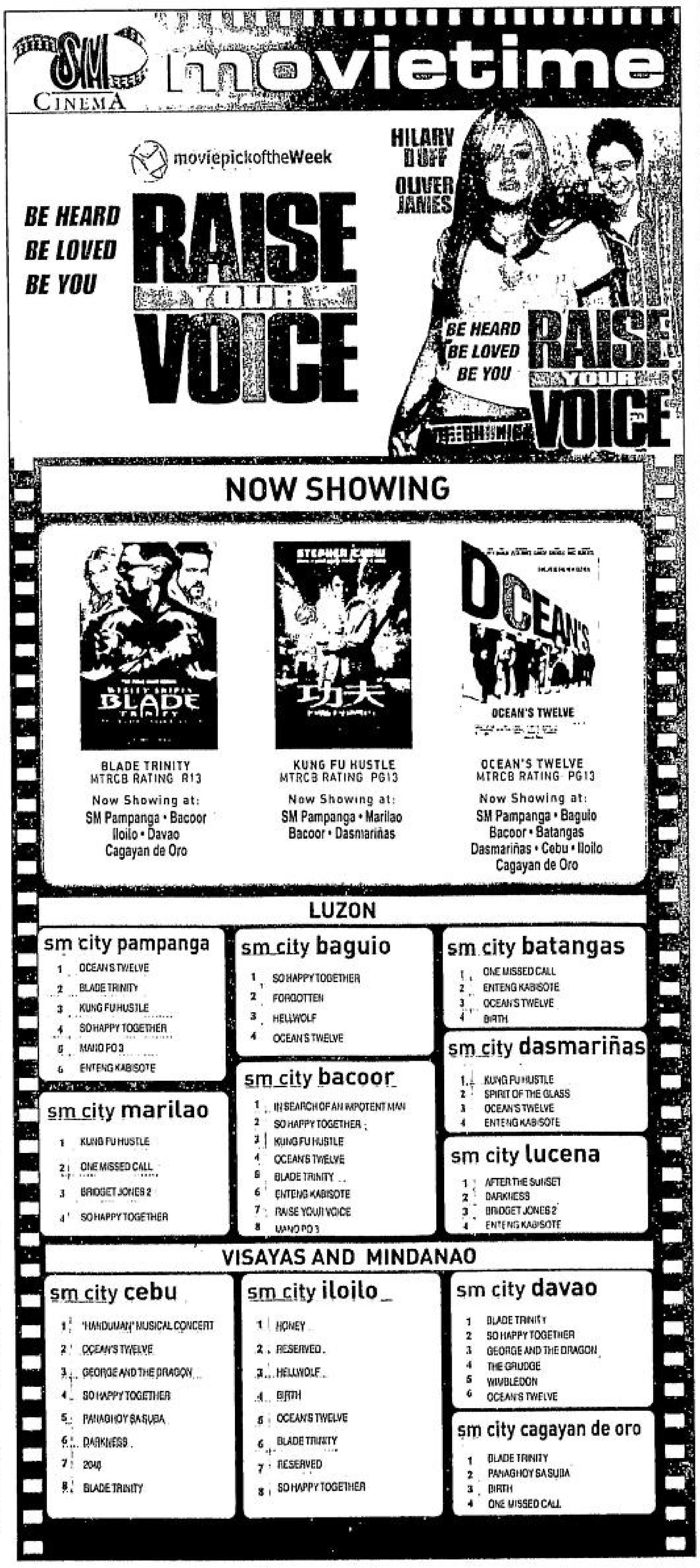
SAG's Rosalind Jarrett announced before the rites covered live by E! Television that an online auction of nominee gifts to benefit the SAG Foundation's children literacy program is on www.sagwards.org/auction.

The SAG Awards show will be held on Saturday, Feb. 5, at the Los Angeles Shrine Exposition Center.

MTRCB RATING PG-13
OPENS JANUARY 19
AMERICA'S NO. 1 FOR 3 CONSECUTIVE WEEKS!
$ 204,300,000 IN THE U.S. AND COUNTING...
Robert De Niro
Ben Stiller
Dustin Hoffman
Barbra Streisand
Blythe Danner
Teri Polo
Meet the Fockers
Misery loves family.
united international pictures
release through Solar Entertainment Corporation
DreamWorks Pictures


bathhouse
From the makers of DUDA/DOUBT Grupong Sinehan Inc. comes another Crisaldo Pablo's digital movie about love and relationship.
Starring: Jet Alcantara, Andoy Ranoy, Rey Pumaloy, John Lapus
JANUARY 19
exclusively at Robinsons Movieworld GALLERIA


THE #1 MOVIE IN MANILA !
From MARVEL, the creator of SPIDERMAN
NOW SHOWING
WESLEY SNIPES
BLADE TRINITY
MARVEL
JESSICA BIEL RYAN REYNOLDS


SM CINEMA movietime
moviepickoftheWeek
BE HEARD
BE LOVED
BE YOU
RAISE YOUR VOICE
HILARY DUFF
OLIVER JAMES

NOW SHOWING
BLADE TRINITY
MTRCB RATING R13
Now Showing at:
SM Pampanga • Bacoor
Iloilo • Davao
Cagayan de Oro

KUNG FU HUSTLE
MTRCB RATING PG13
Now Showing at:
SM Pampanga • Marilao
Bacoor • Dasmariñas

OCEAN'S TWELVE
MTRCB RATING PG13
Now Showing at:
SM Pampanga • Baguio
Bacoor • Batangas
Dasmariñas • Cebu • Iloilo
Cagayan de Oro

LUZON
sm city pampanga
1 OCEAN'S TWELVE
2 BLADE TRINITY
3 KUNG FU HUSTLE
4 SO HAPPY TOGETHER
5 MANO PO 3
6 ENTENG KABISOTE

sm city baguio
1 SO HAPPY TOGETHER
2 FORGOTTEN
3 HELLWOLF
4 OCEAN'S TWELVE

sm city batangas
1 ONE MISSED CALL
2 ENTENG KABISOTE
3 OCEAN'S TWELVE
4 BIRTH

sm city dasmariñas
1 KUNG FU HUSTLE
2 SPIRIT OF THE GLASS
3 OCEAN'S TWELVE
4 ENTENG KABISOTE

sm city marilao
1 KUNG FU HUSTLE
2 ONE MISSED CALL
3 BRIDGET JONES 2
4 SO HAPPY TOGETHER

sm city bacoor
1 IN SEARCH OF AN IMPOTENT MAN
2 SO HAPPY TOGETHER
3 KUNG FU HUSTLE
4 OCEAN'S TWELVE
5 BLADE TRINITY
6 ENTENG KABISOTE
7 RAISE YOUR VOICE
8 MANO PO 3

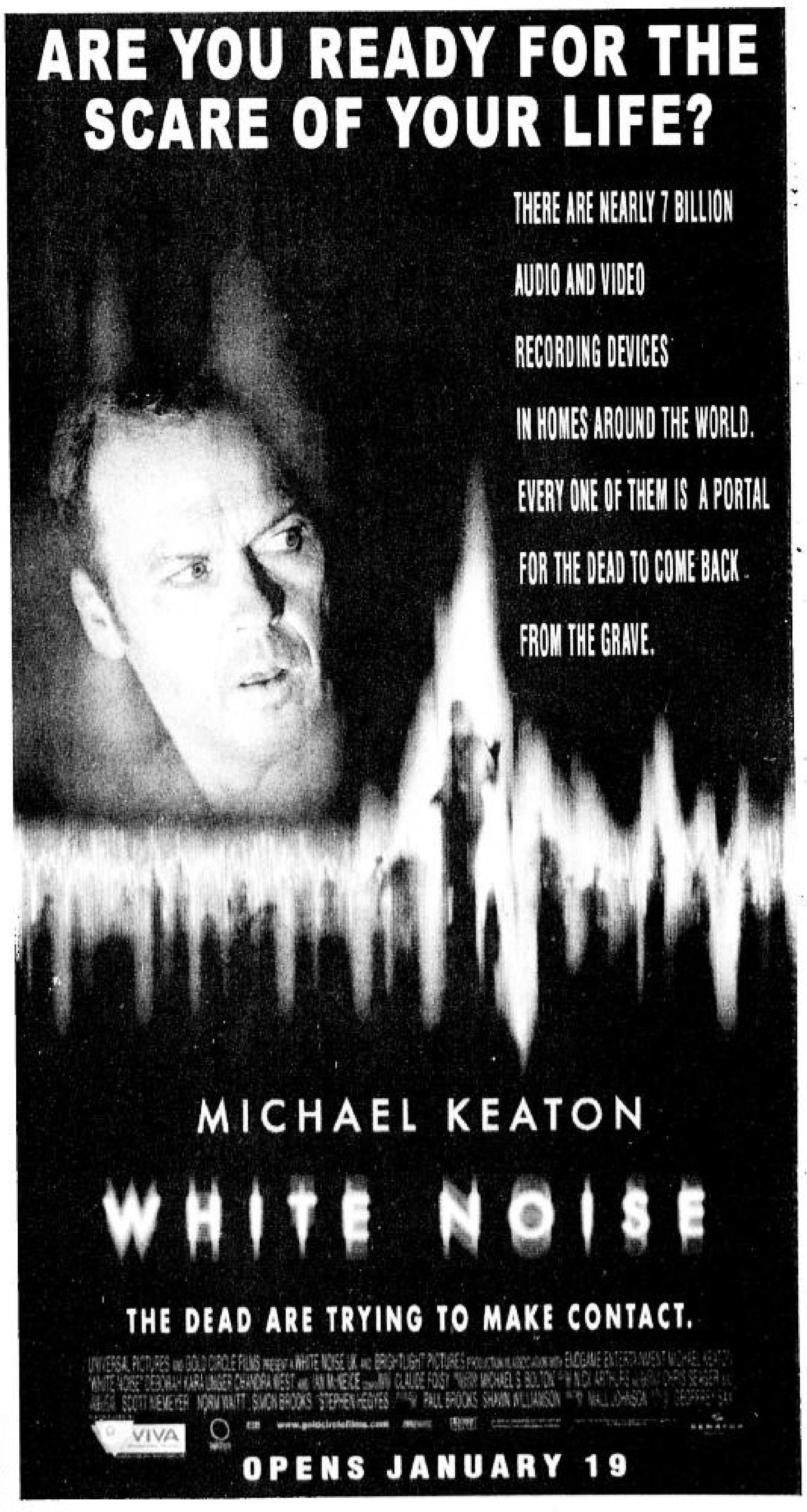
sm city lucena
1 AFTER THE SUNSET
2 DARKNESS
3 BRIDGET JONES 2
4 ENTENG KABISOTE

VISAYAS AND MINDANAO
sm city cebu
1 "HANDUMAN" MUSICAL CONCERT
2 OCEAN'S TWELVE
3 GEORGE AND THE DRAGON
4 SO HAPPY TOGETHER
5 PANAGHOY SA SUBA
6 DARKNESS
7 2046
8 BLADE TRINITY

sm city iloilo
1 HONEY
2 RESERVED
3 HELLWOLF
4 BIRTH
5 OCEAN'S TWELVE
6 BLADE TRINITY
7 RESERVED
8 SO HAPPY TOGETHER

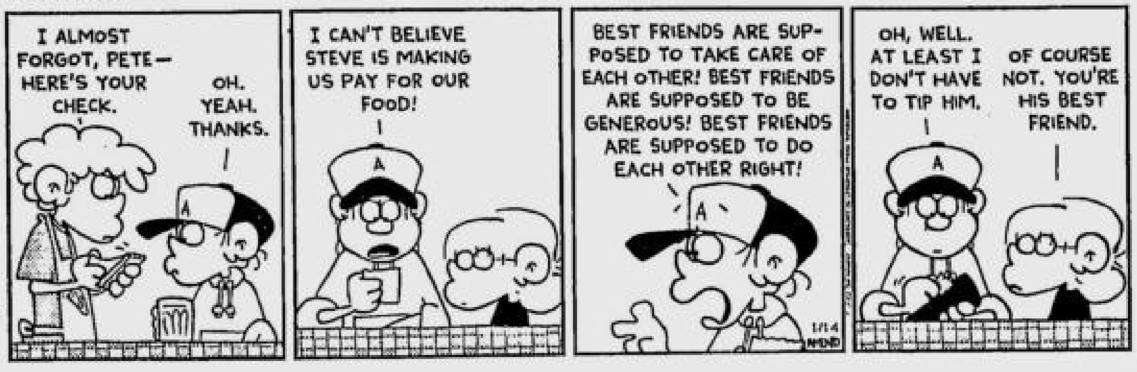
sm city davao
1 BLADE TRINITY
2 SO HAPPY TOGETHER
3 GEORGE AND THE DRAGON
4 THE GRUDGE
5 WIMBLEDON
6 OCEAN'S TWELVE

sm city cagayan de oro
1 BLADE TRINITY
2 PANAGHOY SA SUBA
3 BIRTH
4 ONE MISSED CALL


ARE YOU READY FOR THE SCARE OF YOUR LIFE?
THERE ARE NEARLY 7 BILLION AUDIO AND VIDEO RECORDING DEVICES IN HOMES AROUND THE WORLD. EVERY ONE OF THEM IS A PORTAL FOR THE DEAD TO COME BACK FROM THE GRAVE.
MICHAEL KEATON
WHITE NOISE
THE DEAD ARE TRYING TO MAKE CONTACT.
UNIVERSAL PICTURES and GOLD CIRCLE FILMS present a WHITE NOISE UK and BRIGHTLIGHT PICTURES production in association with ENDGAME ENTERTAINMENT MICHAEL KEATON "WHITE NOISE" DEBORAH KARA UNGER CHANDRA WEST and IAN McNEICE
VIVA
www.goldcirclefilms.com
OPENS JANUARY 19

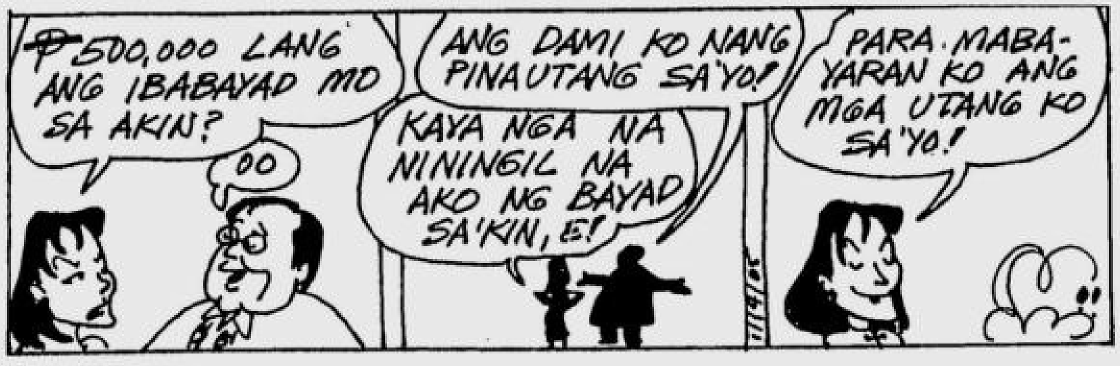
FOXTROT

BY BILL AMEND


I ALMOST FORGOT, PETE— HERE'S YOUR CHECK.
OH. YEAH. THANKS.
I CAN'T BELIEVE STEVE IS MAKING US PAY FOR OUR FOOD!
BEST FRIENDS ARE SUPPOSED TO TAKE CARE OF EACH OTHER! BEST FRIENDS ARE SUPPOSED TO BE GENEROUS! BEST FRIENDS ARE SUPPOSED TO DO EACH OTHER RIGHT!
OH, WELL. AT LEAST I DON'T HAVE TO TIP HIM.
OF COURSE NOT. YOU'RE HIS BEST FRIEND.
1/14 AMEND

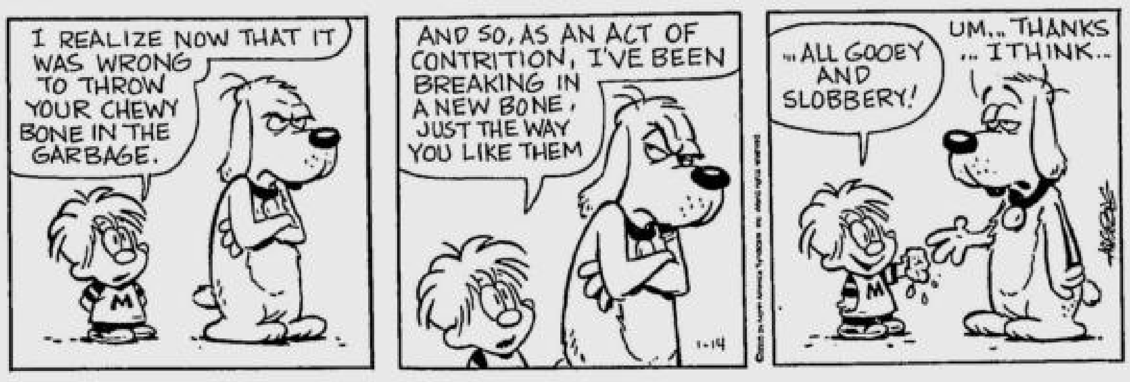
A. LIPIN

BY JESS ABRERA


₱500,000 LANG ANG IBABAYAD MO SA AKIN?
OO
ANG DAMI KO NANG PINAUTANG SA'YO!
KAYA NGA NA NININGIL NA AKO NG BAYAD SA'KIN, E!
PARA MABAYARAN KO ANG MGA UTANG KO SA'YO!
1/14/05

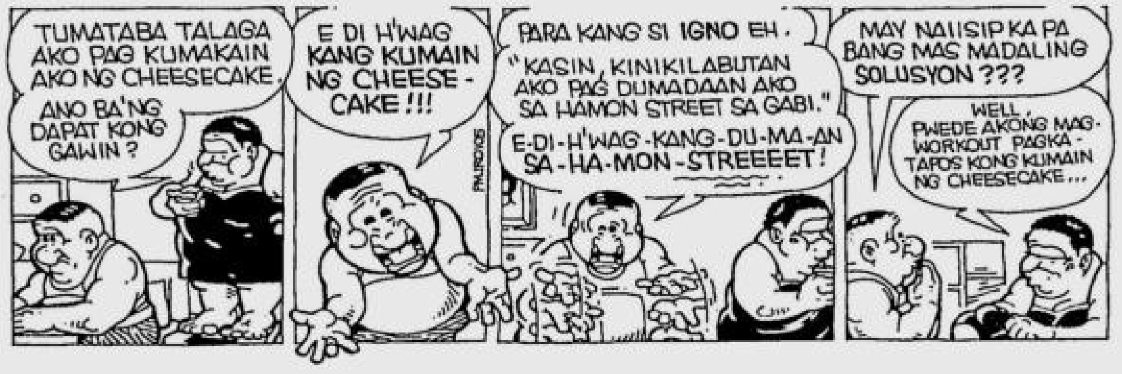
MARVIN

BY TOM ARMSTRONG


I REALIZE NOW THAT IT WAS WRONG TO THROW YOUR CHEWY BONE IN THE GARBAGE.
AND SO, AS AN ACT OF CONTRITION, I'VE BEEN BREAKING IN A NEW BONE, JUST THE WAY YOU LIKE THEM
...ALL GOOEY AND SLOBBERY!
UM... THANKS ... I THINK...
1-14

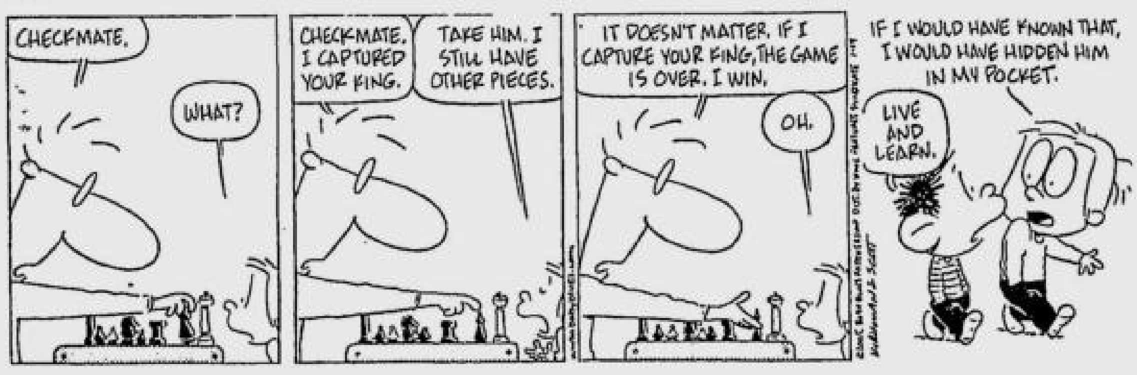
PUGAD BABOY

BY P.M. JUNIOR


TUMATABA TALAGA AKO PAG KUMAKAIN AKO NG CHEESECAKE
ANO BA'NG DAPAT KONG GAWIN?
E DI H'WAG KANG KUMAIN NG CHEESE-CAKE!!!
PARA KANG SI IGNO EH.
"KASIN, KINIKILABUTAN AKO PAG DUMADAAN AKO SA HAMON STREET SA GABI."
E-DI-H'WAG-KANG-DU-MA-AN SA-HA-MON-STREEEET!
MAY NAIISIP KA PA BANG MAS MADALING SOLUSYON???
WELL, PWEDE AKONG MAG-WORKOUT PAGKATAPOS KONG KUMAIN NG CHEESECAKE...
PMJR

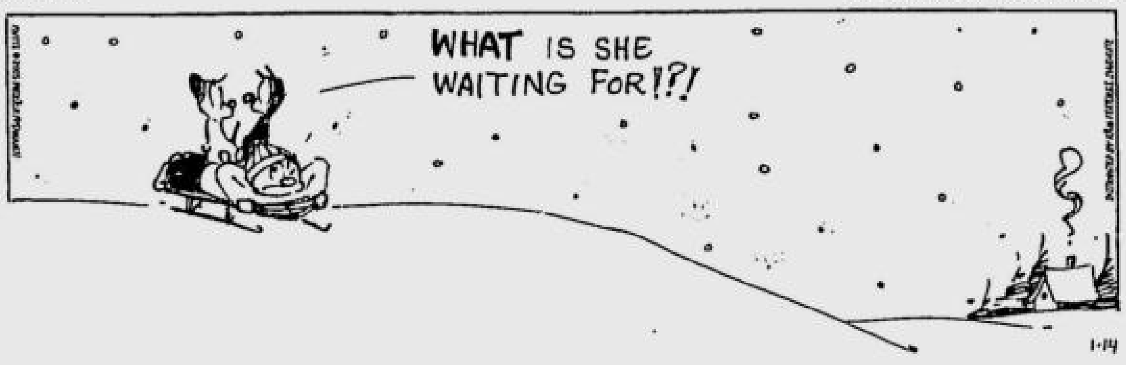
BABY BLUES

BY JERRY SCOTT


CHECKMATE.
WHAT?
CHECKMATE. I CAPTURED YOUR KING.
TAKE HIM. I STILL HAVE OTHER PIECES.
IT DOESN'T MATTER. IF I CAPTURE YOUR KING, THE GAME IS OVER. I WIN.
OH.
IF I WOULD HAVE KNOWN THAT, I WOULD HAVE HIDDEN HIM IN MY POCKET.
LIVE AND LEARN.

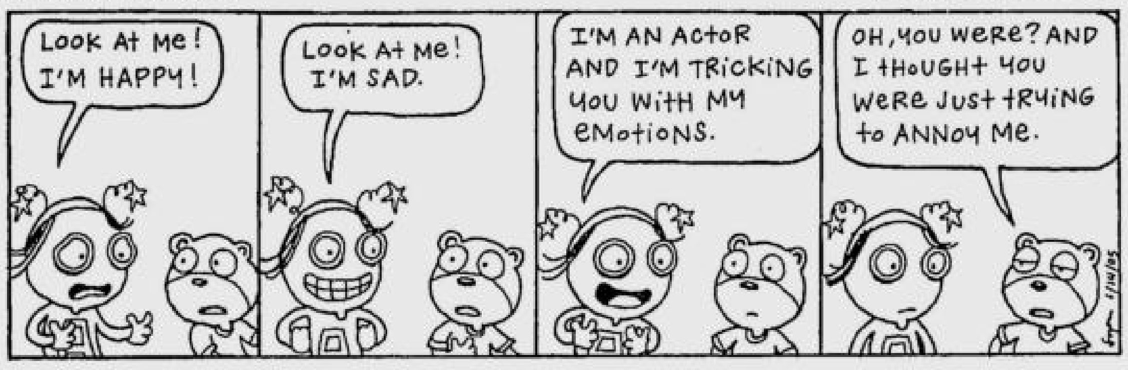
MUTTS

BY PATRICK McDONNELL


WHAT IS SHE WAITING FOR!?!
1-14

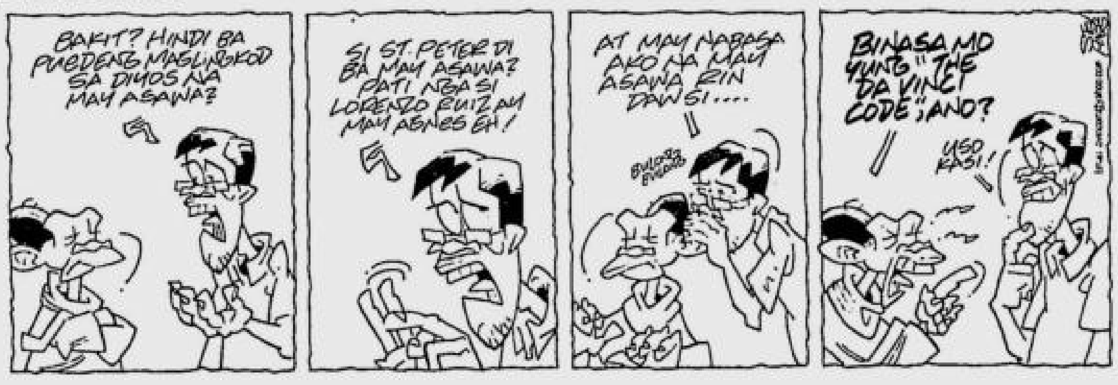
ATOMO AND WEBOY

BY LYRA GARCELLANO


Look At Me! I'M HAPPY!
Look At Me! I'M SAD.
I'M AN ActoR AND I'M TRicKiNG you With My eMotioNS.
OH, you were? AND I thought you were Just tRying to ANNoy Me.
1/14/05

DIVINE COMEDY

BY STEVEN PABALINAS


BAKIT? HINDI BA PUEDENG MAGLINGKOD SA DIYOS NA MAY ASAWA?
SI ST. PETER DI BA MAY ASAWA? PATI NGA SI LORENZO RUIZ AY MAY ASAWA EH!
AT MAY NABASA AKO NA MAY ASAWA RIN DAW SI....
BINASA MO YUNG "THE DA VINCI CODE", ANO?
USO KASI!

HOROSCOPE

BY FRANCIS DRAKE

YOU BORN TODAY: You are unusually courageous. You quickly see the whole picture, the bottom line. In a way, you like living on the edge, at the precipice. You're not afraid to meet great odds. You're a natural leader, although you don't necessarily seek this out. Work hard in the year ahead for rewards in the following year, 2006. **Birthdate of:** Emily Watson, actress; Jason Bateman, actor; Albert Schweitzer, Nobel Peace Prize winner.

ARIES (March 21 to April 19): This continues to be a bit of a dicey day when it comes to talking to authority figures, parents, teachers and even the police. Your best bet is to lie low and play it cool.

TAURUS (April 20 to May 20): You're excited about travel plans or something having to do with publishing or higher education. You might also be talking to someone a great distance away. Be patient

GEMINI (May 21 to June 20): It's important for you to sort out something that you share with someone else. This could pertain to debt, mortgages, shared property, inheritances. But take your time doing it.

CANCER (June 21 to July 22): Discussions with partners are quite important now. Think carefully before you speak. Decide what your objective is. Be sure you know what you want.

LEO (July 23 to Aug. 22): Keep up a steady pace when getting organized. You have a lot to do now. Don't be overwhelmed by what's on your plate. Just nibble from the sides. Take things one at a time.

VIRGO (Aug. 23 to Sept. 22): Look for ways to express your creativity now. Don't worry about how creative you are. The joy is in the doing; it's the process.

LIBRA (Sept. 23 to Oct. 22): Important things are happening at home now. You're making changes, and you're having important discussions with family members. Don't push the river.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23 to Nov. 21): It's extra important to be clear in all your communications with others now. You definitely have something you want to say. Make sure that others understand you.

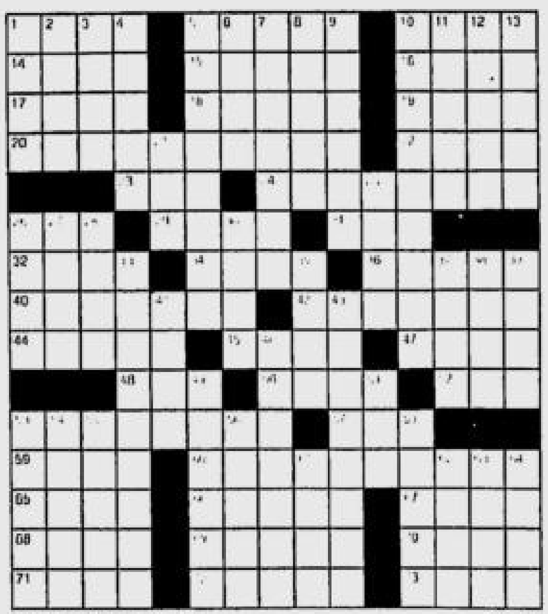
SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22 to Dec. 21): Although you are involved with shopping, buying and selling, and financial decisions right now, deep down you're wondering about your values. What really matters in life?

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22 to Jan. 19): There are three planets in your sign now. This makes you unusually confident as you approach others. People are more willing to listen to you now than at other times.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20 to Feb. 18): This is a good time to do research and look for answers to old questions. (Fortunately, you prefer to work behind the scenes right now.)

PISCES (Feb. 19 to March 20): Give in to your social urges. Your popularity rating is strong now, and you will truly enjoy the company of others.

DAILY CROSSWORD



By Alan P. Olschwang
Hunlington Beach, CA
1/14/05

ACROSS
1 Clerical garb
5 Stable denizens
10 Citrus hybrid
14 Cry out loud
15 Goodnight girl
16 Refusals
17 Concluded
18 Beelzebub
19 Twofold
20 Start of Ann Crittenden quote
22 Otherwise
23 Rock composer Brian
24 Delayed
26 Part of an e-mail address
29 Conduit
31 Unit of work
32 Norway's patron saint
34 Corrode
36 Irritated
40 Part 2 of quote
42 Part 3 of quote
44 "Cabaret" director
45 Fencer's tool
47 Mark for removal
48 Seasoned sailor
50 Tolkien baddies
52 Anatomical duct
53 Tropical fruit tree
57 Composer Delibes
59 Pizzeria need
60 End of quote
65 Small monkey
66 Like a peacock?
67 Page
68 Merit
69 Banks of baseball
70 Speed along
71 Hosiery mishap
72 Takes ten
73 Shape flint

DOWN
1 MP's pursuit
2 Dolly of "Hello, Dolly!"
3 Complaint
4 Binge
5 Show Me State
6 Islands off Ireland
7 Comebacks
8 Related on mom's side
9 Legislative body
10 New collegian
11 Pianist Glenn
12 Rent
13 Like Napoleon on Elba
21 Ill. neighbor
25 Sere
26 Remove
27 Jumble
28 Soaks up some rays
30 Winsome
33 Affixing
35 Amphitheater level
37 Ukraine's capital
38 Singer Fitzgerald
39 Changes color
41 Year type
43 Isolates
46 Tufts on shoes
49 Door knocker
51 Six in Bologna
53 Showers with affection
54 Relating to birds
55 Colorful tropical fish
56 "Casablanca" co-star
58 Alabama city
61 Give up
62 Promised Land
63 Icelandic saga
64 Ooze

Thursday's Puzzle Solved

A	J	A	R	■	W	A	S	T	E	■	A	P	S	E
L	O	G	O	■	A	F	T	E	R	■	T	R	I	G
S	W	E	E	T	Y	O	U	N	G	T	H	I	N	G
O	L	D	■	W	O	O	D	■	■	H	E	N	C	E
■	■	■	R	O	U	T	■	S	C	E	N	T	E	D
R	O	B	U	S	T	■	S	E	R	F	S	■	■	■
U	G	L	I	■	■	A	W	A	I	T	■	S	A	G
B	L	O	N	D	E	B	O	M	B	S	H	E	L	L
Y	E	T	■	E	V	E	R	Y	■	■	E	R	I	E
■	■	■	S	M	I	T	E	■	K	A	R	A	T	E
P	A	S	T	E	L	S	■	A	N	N	E	■	■	■
O	S	H	E	A	■	■	G	N	A	T	■	S	K	I
S	H	R	I	N	K	I	N	G	V	I	O	L	E	T
S	E	E	N	■	E	R	A	S	E	■	H	O	P	E
E	N	D	S	■	N	E	W	T	S	■	S	W	I	M

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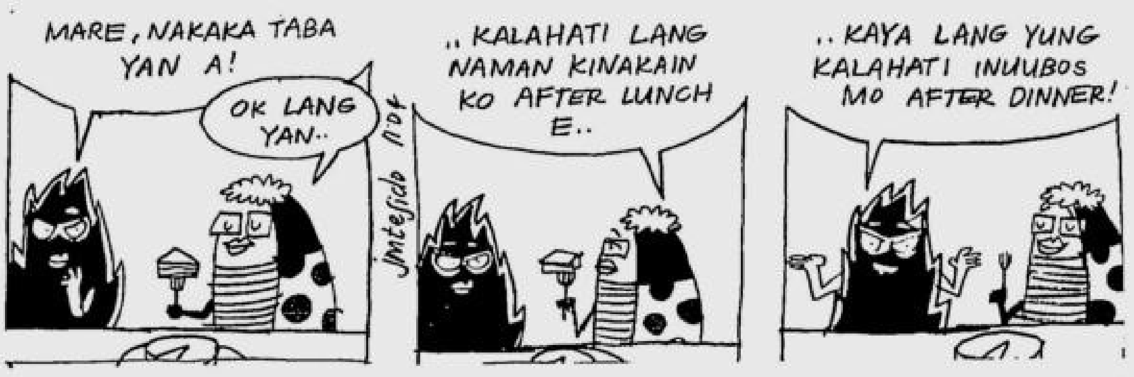
1/14/05

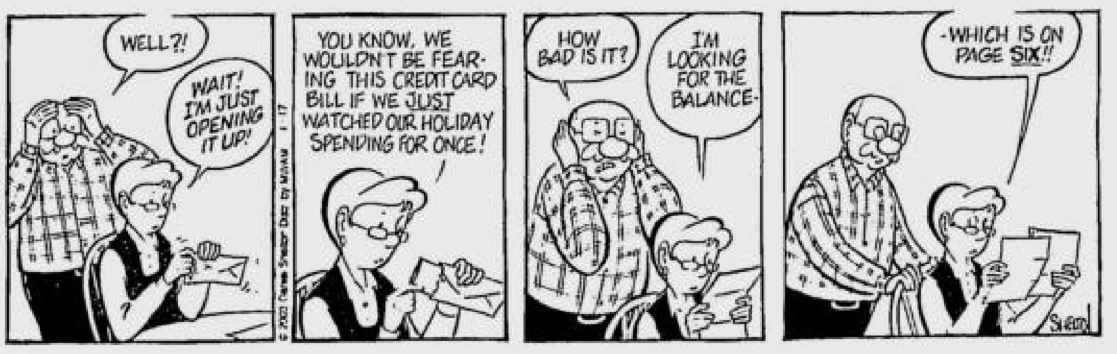
MIKROKOSMOS

BY JOMIKE TEJIDO


MARE, NAKAKA TABA YAN A!
OK LANG YAN..
.. KALAHATI LANG NAMAN KINAKAIN KO AFTER LUNCH E..
.. KAYA LANG YUNG KALAHATI INUUBOS MO AFTER DINNER!
Jmtejido 1104

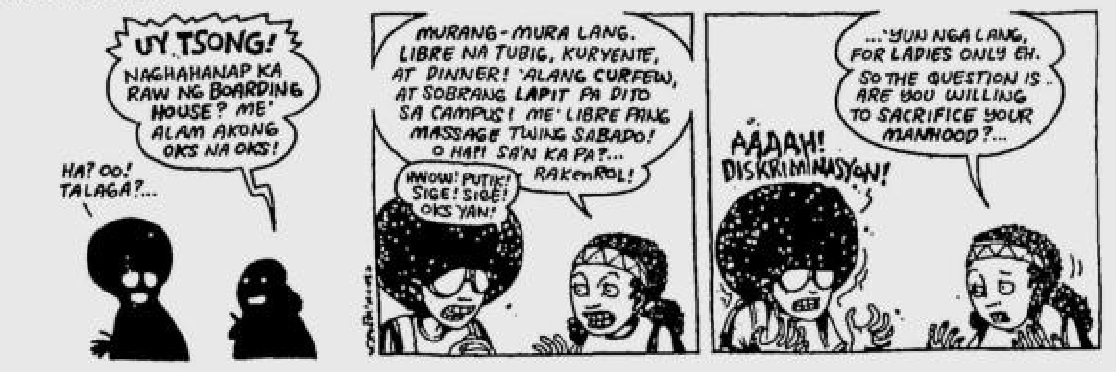
BEN

BY DANIEL SHELTON


WELL?!
WAIT! I'M JUST OPENING IT UP!
YOU KNOW, WE WOULDN'T BE FEARING THIS CREDIT CARD BILL IF WE JUST WATCHED OUR HOLIDAY SPENDING FOR ONCE!
HOW BAD IS IT?
I'M LOOKING FOR THE BALANCE-
-WHICH IS ON PAGE SIX!!
SHELTON

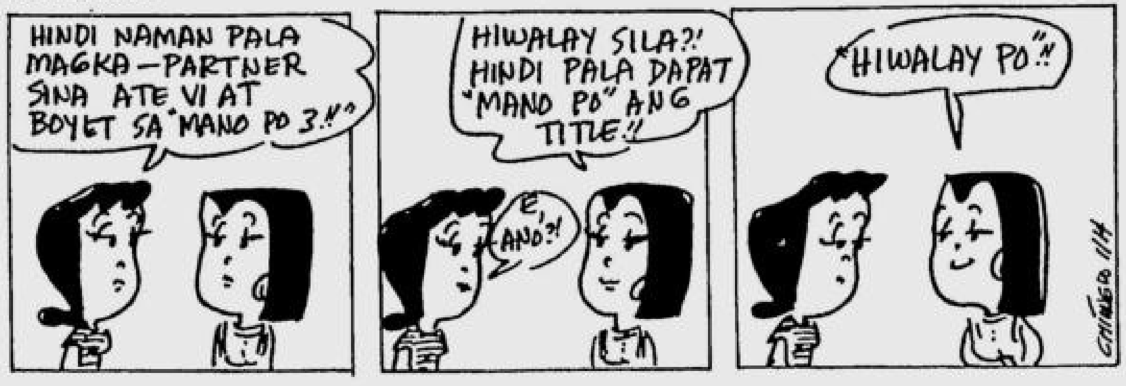
KIKO MACHINE

BY MANIX ABRERA


UY TSONG! NAGHAHANAP KA RAW NG BOARDING HOUSE? ME' ALAM AKONG OKS NA OKS!
HA? OO! TALAGA?...
MURANG-MURA LANG. LIBRE NA TUBIG, KURYENTE, AT DINNER! 'ALANG CURFEW, AT SOBRANG LAPIT PA DITO SA CAMPUS! ME' LIBRE PANG MASSAGE TUWING SABADO! O HA!! SA'N KA PA?...
WOW! PUTIK! SIGE! SIGE! OKS YAN!
RAKenROL!
...'YUN NGA LANG, FOR LADIES ONLY EH. SO THE QUESTION IS.. ARE YOU WILLING TO SACRIFICE YOUR MANHOOD?...
AAAAH! DISKRIMINASYON!

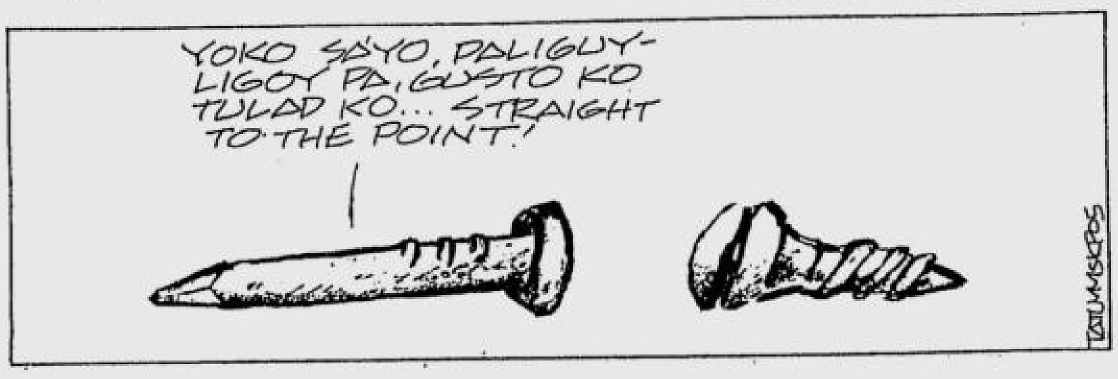
LOVEKNOTS

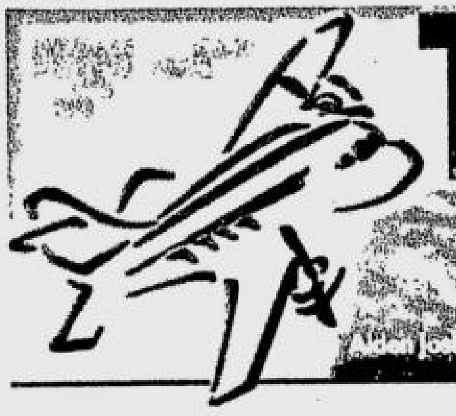
BY ELIZABETH CHIONGLO


HINDI NAMAN PALA MAGKA-PARTNER SINA ATE VI AT BOYET SA "MANO PO 3!"
HIWALAY SILA?! HINDI PALA DAPAT "MANO PO" ANG TITLE!!
E? ANO?!
"HIWALAY PO"!!
CHIONGLO 1/14

TULDOK

BY PAPU AND TATUM MILAMBILING


YOKO SA'YO, PALIGUY-LIGOY PA, GUSTO KO TULAD KO... STRAIGHT TO THE POINT!
TATUM/KSPOS



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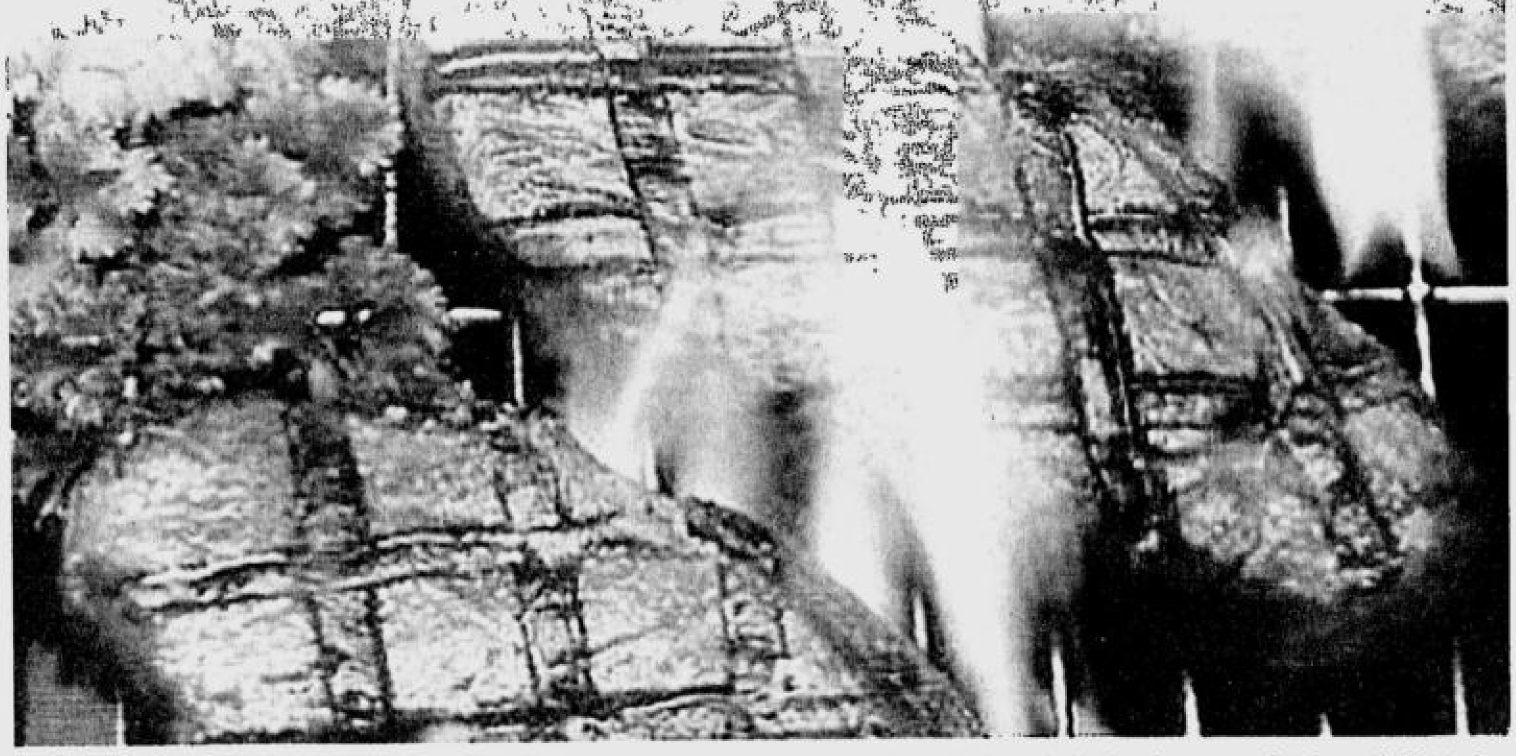
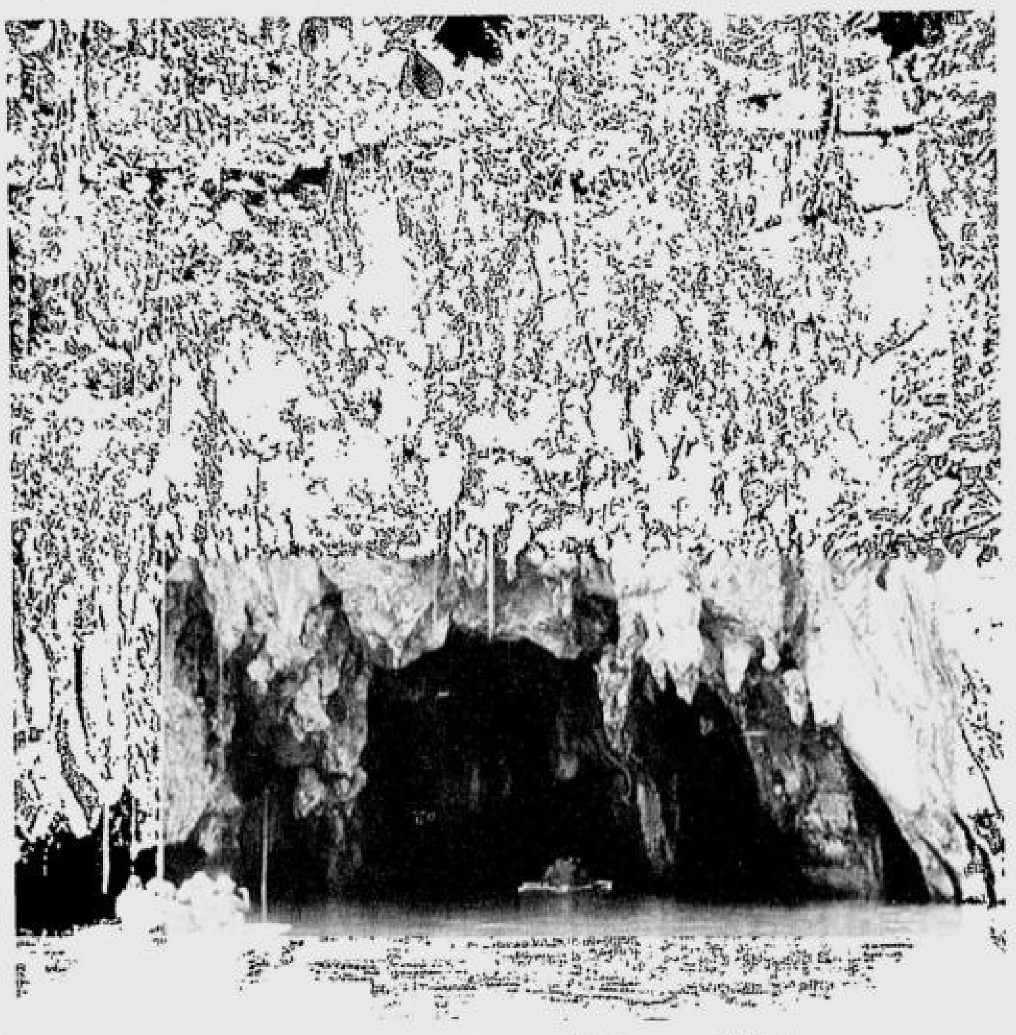


JUICY, tender and mouth-watering steaks done to your liking, complemented by your choice of wine - nothing compares to a delightful meal that celebrates all the good things in life. At The Bellevue Hotel, southern Metro Manila's dining mecca, everyday is a celebration of the senses. This January, delight in the pleasures of smell and taste at the hotel's Café D' Asie with the exciting Steak Promo.

Starting at P590+ to P1,850, choose from among a wide variety of delectable steaks such as the Minute Steak "Strindberg," Sirloin Steak "Mirabeau, " US Ribeye Steak, US Beef Cutlet and Paillard of Beef, deliciously cooked to your specifications. For maximum enjoyment of your choice cuts, order wine by the bottle or by the glass. Choose from among the wines from the wine promotion, such as Fortant de France Chardonnay, Fortant de France Syrah, Beringer Stone Cellars Chardonnay, Beringer Stone Cellars Sauvignon, Robert Skali Chardonnay and Robert Skali Merlot, and get 40 percent off on your crisp whites and smooth reds.

Food fiestas, international buffets and sweet surprises await at Alabang's gourmet heaven, The Bellevue Hotel. For larger gatherings and special occasions, the newly opened Bellevue Grand Ballroom provides a classy setting, plus food selections to celebrate truly special moments. For inquiries, call 771-8181.

Asturias Palawan adventure

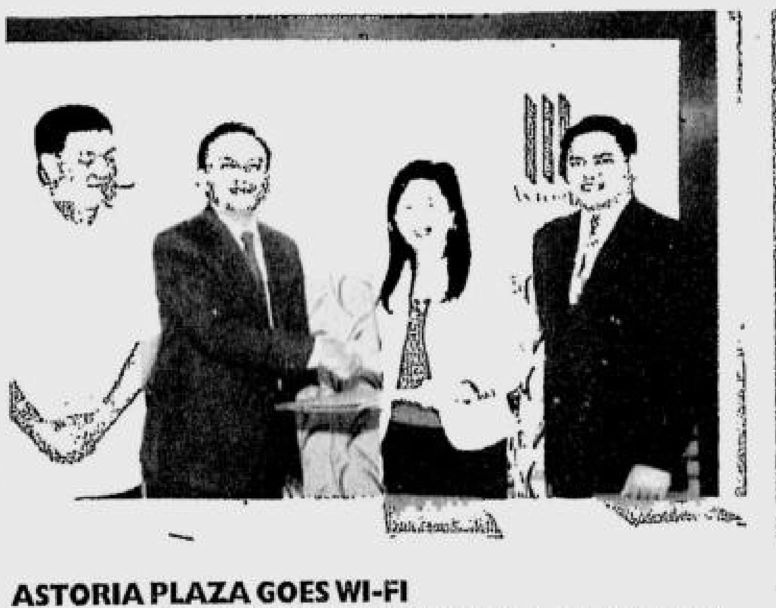


DURING the Spanish era, Palawan was divided into three provinces - Castilla, Balabac and Asturias. The latter being the capital, now known as Puerto Princesa, it is but fitting for Asturias Hotel to be named as such since it is the only hotel in the area that truly captures the island's unparalleled natural beauty and Castilian charm.

Puerto Princesa is considered as one of the most exciting places to visit. Tourists often go home enthralled with vivid memories of its natural beauty, exotic landscapes and endless adventure offerings. Asturias Hotel gives you another reason to enjoy and explore Palawan's wealth of wonders with the hotel's specially designed "Asturias Palawan Adventure."

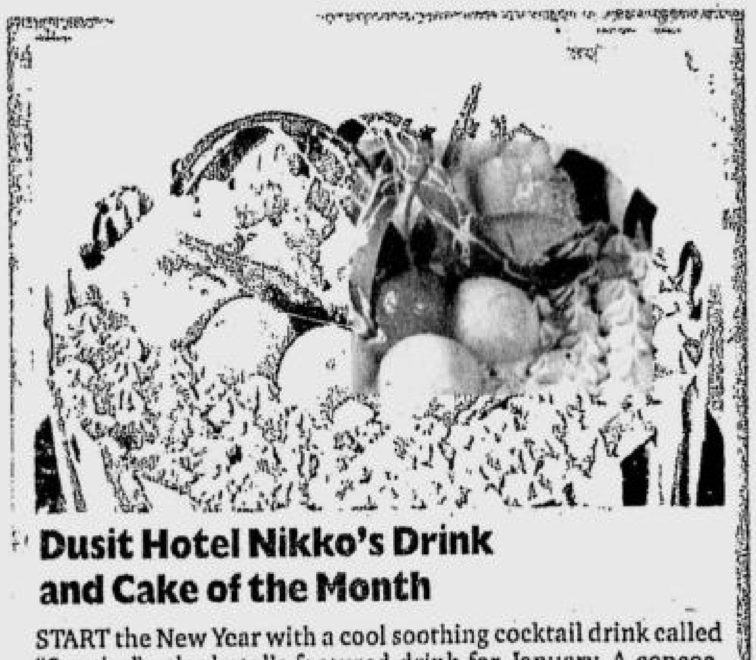
Priced at only P7,300 net per person (based on twin and triple sharing), this special offer entitles adventure lovers with a four (4) days and three (3) nights accommodation in the hotel, roundtrip airport transfers and full board meals throughout their stay. Guests' adventure itinerary includes a half-day city tour, exploration tour of the renowned St. Paul's Subterranean River, and a Honda Bay island hopping escapade. Availing the package would also entitle guests free usage of the hotel's swimming pool and jacuzzi.

The "Asturias Palawan Adventure" tour package was created in line with the hotel's thrust in promoting eco-tourism and to meet the increasing demand of its valued patrons. Asturias Hotel invites you to explore Palawan and rediscover ones zest for adventure. For inquiries and reservations, call their Manila Sales Office at Tel. No.: (632) 751-3615 or Fax No.: (632) 751-3616. Visit their website at www.asturiashotel.ph.



ASTORIA PLAZA GOES WI-FI

Astoria Plaza recently signed up with Innove Communications through its corporate business group, GlobeQuest in providing broadband service to all its clients. Broadband service allows fast and instant Internet connection in all of its rooms. Wireless Internet connection is now also available at the hotel's main lobby, coffee shop, business center and all its function rooms. Shown in photo during the formal contract signing are (from left): Boboy C. Romero, GlobeQuest head; Gil B. Genio, Innove Communications CEO; Vivian S. Ng, Astoria Plaza VP - Operations; and Ping J. Regalado, Astoria Plaza's hotel manager.



Dusit Hotel Nikko's Drink and Cake of the Month

START the New Year with a cool soothing cocktail drink called "Sunrise" - the hotel's featured drink for January. A concoction of apricot brandy, calamansi juice, syrup, fresh apple, and orange juice, this drink comes along with a rooster stuffed toy. Priced at P400++ and is available in all outlets. Take a bite of this luscious cake and satisfying your cravings, well imagine no more for you can have this "Mango Butter Scotch Cake" either in slice priced at P75 nett or the whole cake pegged at P750 nett at the Deli Shop. Offered for the entire month of January. For details call 867-3333.

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INQUIRER AT SCREEN ACTORS GUILD

Jamie Foxx tops his own Globes nominations

By Ruben V. Nepales
LA Correspondent

LOS ANGELES—Jamie Foxx topped his recent record three Golden Globe nominations when he earned four nominations for the 11th Annual Screen Actors Guild (SAG) Awards, announced early Tuesday morning.

The SAG Awards, selected by actors' peers across the United States, nominated Foxx for Best Actor ("Ray"), Best Supporting Actor ("Collateral"), Best Actor in a TV Movie or Miniseries ("Redemption") and as a cast member of "Ray," Best Performance by a Cast in a Film.

"Alexander's" Rosario Dawson and James Denton of the new hit TV series "Desperate Housewives" announced the nominations in ceremonies attended by INQUIRER Entertainment at the Pacific Design Center in Los Angeles. Actress Melissa Gilbert, who is SAG president, introduced the pair.

Hilary Swank, Oscar's 1999 Best Actress, also scored a feat with three nominations: Best Actress (for the acclaimed Clint Eastwood-directed boxing drama, "Million Dollar Baby"), Best Actress in a TV Movie or Miniseries ("Iron Jawed Angels") and, as part of the "Million" ensemble, Best Performance by a Cast in a Film.

Overwhelmed

In a statement given to INQUIRER Entertainment, Swank said: "This recognition from my peers is overwhelming. I am honored to share these nominations with Clint, Morgan (Freeman) and Katja (von Garnier, her director in 'Iron')."

Freeman, who snagged a nomination for Best Supporting Actor as an ex-fighter turned gym caretaker in "Million," also told INQUIRER Entertainment: "I feel honored to be included. Oh, I love the Screen Actors Guild—my peers. It's always nice when your comrades give you a slap in the back. But Clint did such a good job—a light hand but such a vibrant energy on the set. He's an actor's dream and actors know that."

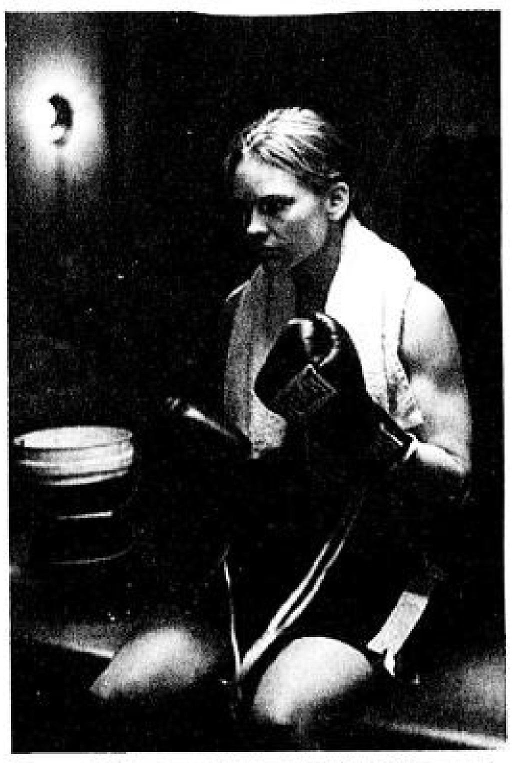
"Sideways" continued its winning ways with the most nominations for a film. The acclaimed comedy set in Santa Barbara, California's wine country earned nods for Best Actor (Paul Giamatti), Best Supporting Actor and Actress (Thomas Haden Church and Virginia Madsen) and Best Ensemble.

Freddie Highmore, who was only 10 when he filmed "Finding Neverland," which imagines how J.M. Barrie (played by Johnny Depp, who got a Best Actor citation) came to write "Peter Pan," made news with his Best Supporting Actor citation.

Critics predicted that Highmore's performance, especially in a scene when he cries while talking to Depp in a park, would make him a major participant in this Hollywood awards season.

But so far, award-giving bodies have shut out Highmore, who is now 12 years old. The SAG recognition brings hope that he would

FOXX/ A29



BIG FIGHT. Foxx is nominated for movie and TV work, notably for "Ray" (above). Swank is nominated for best actress for playing a female boxer in "Million Dollar Baby"

SAG President Melissa Gilbert (right) introduces Rosario Dawson and James Denton who announce the nominees.
JANET SUSAN R. NEPALES

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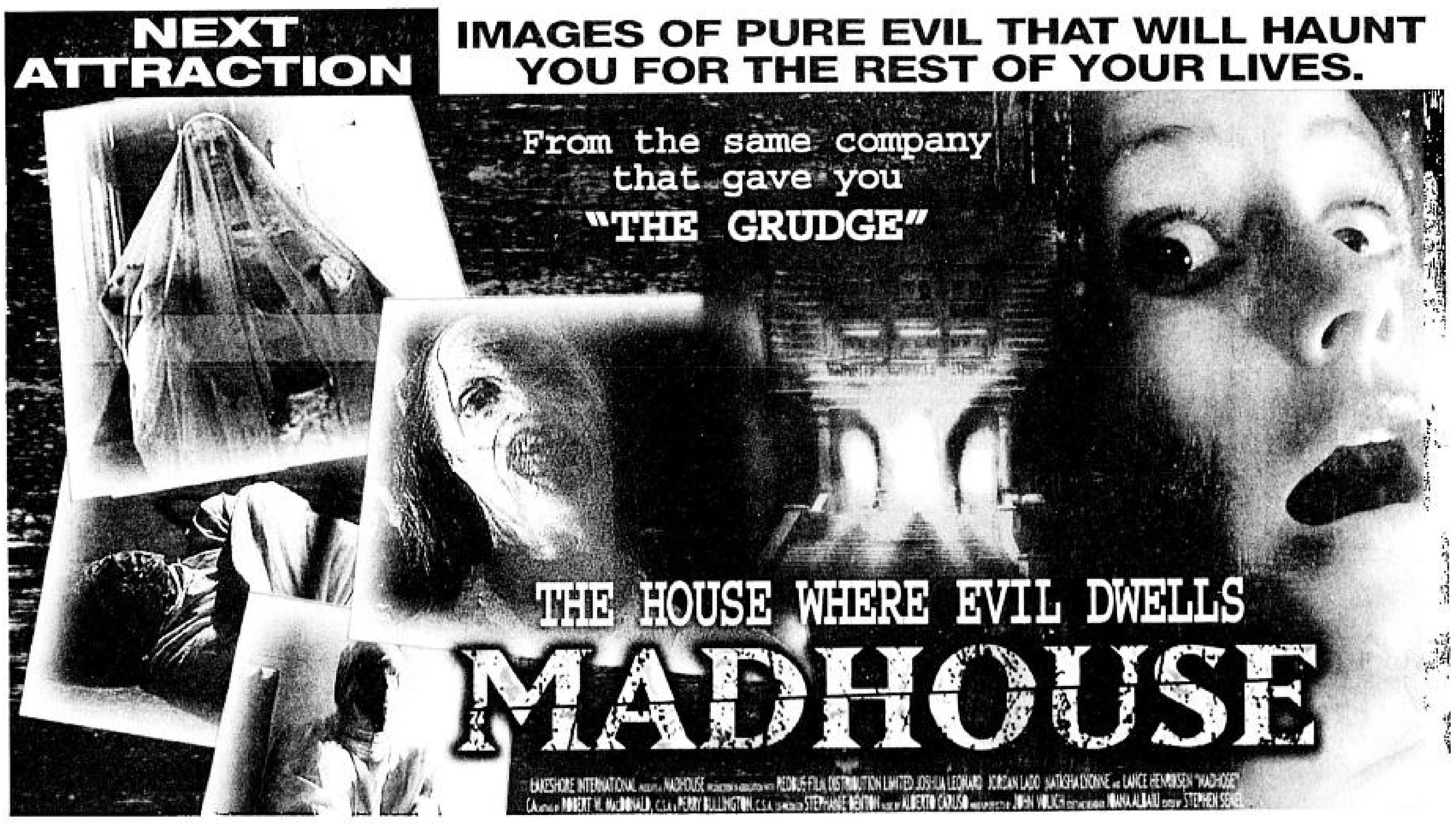

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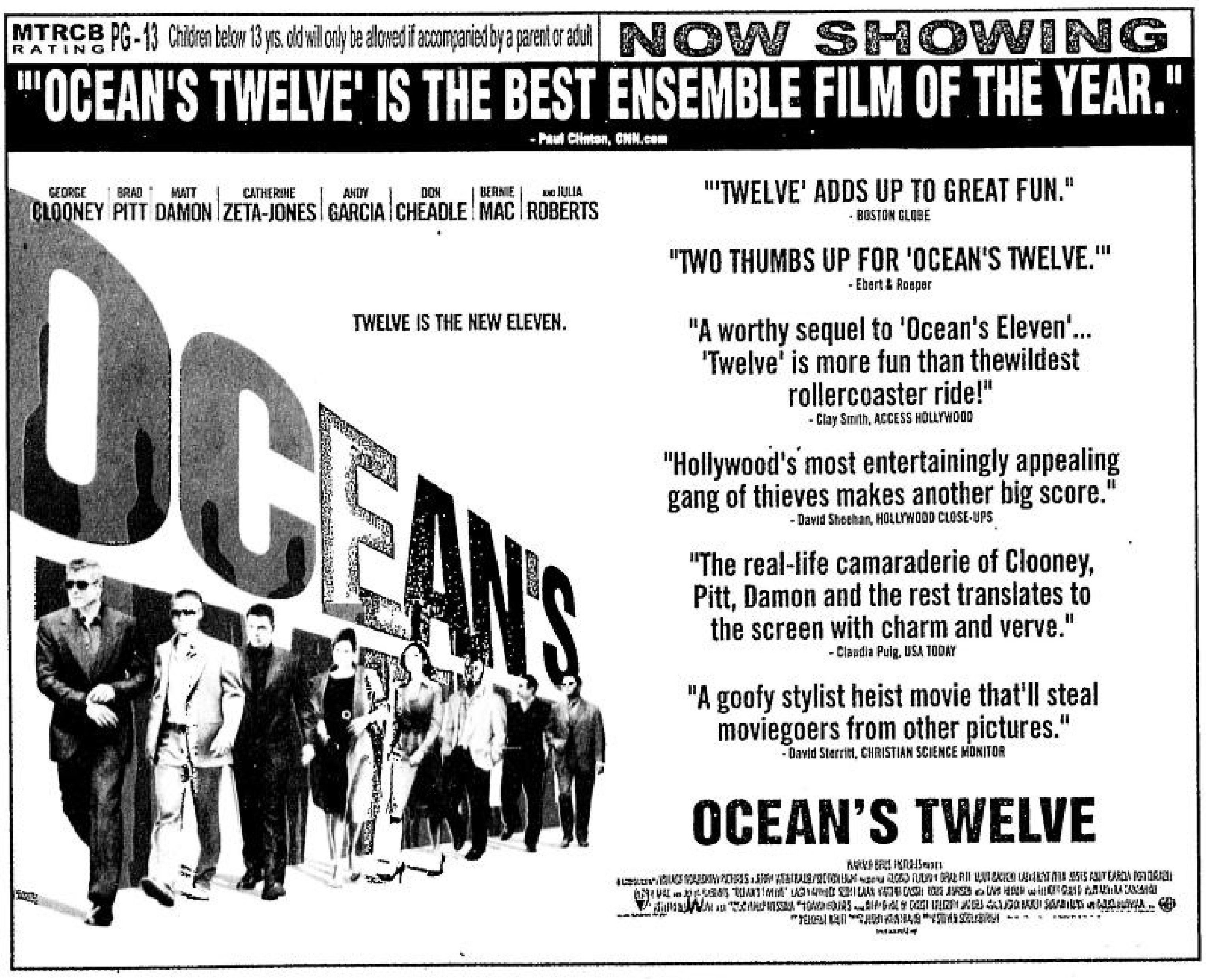

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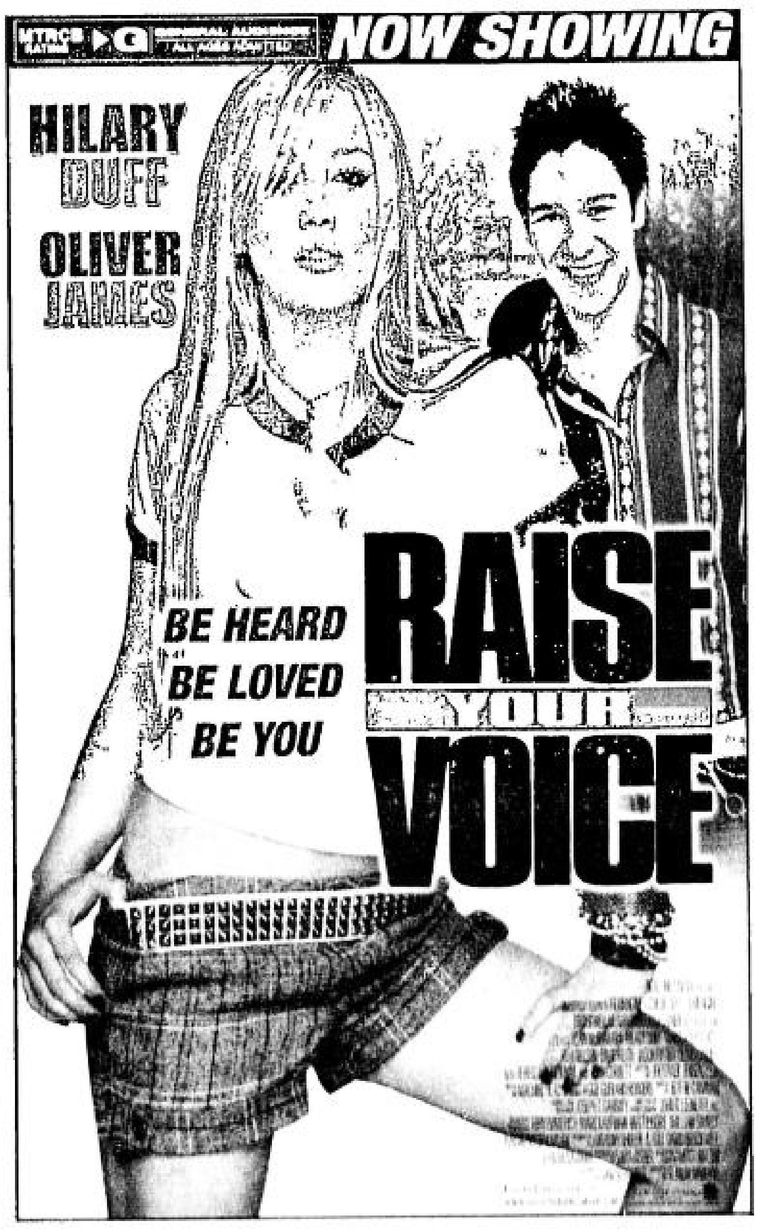
OCEAN'S TWELVE



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Inquirer covers Golden Globes live Monday

THE BIGGEST names from the worlds of film and television will gather under one roof to see who will walk away with the honors at The 62nd Annual Golden Globe Awards, live, on Monday, Jan. 17, starting at 9 a.m. on Star World.

The Hollywood Foreign Press Association (HFPA) awards the Golden Globes to acknowledge achievements in various categories in film and TV during the calendar year.

Inquirer Entertainment's LA Correspondent Ruben Nepales will cover the Golden Globes as a member of the HFPA.

With six nominations, "The Aviator" faces "Closer," "Finding Neverland," "Million Dollar Baby," "Hotel Rwanda" and "Kinsey" in the race for Best Motion Picture-Drama.

The category of Best Motion Picture-Musical and Comedy sees a mixed bag of nominations, including "Eternal Sunshine of the Spotless Mind," "The Incredibles," "The Phantom of the Opera," "Ray" and "Sideways."

The award for Best Actor-Drama will be a toss-up between Hollywood A-listers and acclaimed actors including Javier Bardem, Don Cheadle, Johnny Depp, Leonardo DiCaprio and Liam Neeson.

Scarlett Johannson, Nicole Kidman, Imelda Staunton, Hilary Swank and Uma Thurman vie for the Best Actress-Drama trophy.

Jamie Foxx has had a breakout year with three nominations, the most for any individual—two for movies and one for TV.

After the success of "Hero" and "Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon," China has another prospect with a Best Foreign Language Film nomination in Zhang Yimou's "House of Flying Daggers."

The Cecil B. DeMille Award, the highest honor of the year bestowed by the Hollywood Foreign Press Associations, goes to Robin Williams, an 11-time Golden Globe nominee and a 5-time winner, as well as an Academy Award winner and a multiple Grammy-winner.

The first list of presenters for this year includes Tim Robbins, Renee Zellweger, Charlize Theron, Naomi Watts and Samuel L. Jackson. Other celebrity presenters will be revealed in the coming days.

It's going to be all about glamour, gowns, and golden opportunities at this year's Golden Globe Awards to be held at the International Ballroom of the Beverly Hilton Hotel.

The Globe Awards on Star World Live will have replays at 8 p.m. and 11:30 p.m. Monday.

GLOBE AWARDS
HOLLYWOOD FOREIGN PRESS
NBC

WINNER. Previous Golden Globe winner Sarah Jessica Parker

GARY V encouraging people with the love of God through music.

Gary V concert that 'Winnie' postponed happens tonight

THE GARY Valenciano concert, which was postponed last month due to Typhoon Winnie, is finally taking place at the Batangas Provincial Complex in Batangas City tonight, according to the organizers, Powerheads Philippines.

SHOW TIME

This time, the concert coincides with the town fiesta held in honor of the Sto. Niño. Earlier, a two-day photo contest and a children's art exhibit open at the Knights of Columbus Building. The Bb. Lungsod ng Batangas will be crowned the day after Gary's concert, Jan. 15, and a civic-military parade and mini-band competition will cap the festivities on Sunday, Jan. 16.

Powerheads Phils. is headed by Dr. Yolinda Balmes. Gary's inspirational concert aims to encourage people with the love of God through music.

Proceeds of the concert will go to the Pastoral Center of the Basilica of the Immaculate Conception.

The Batangas Provincial Complex is the newest, largest entertainment venue in Batangas City, with a seating capacity of 8,500.

The show's musical director is Mon Faustino. Tickets are P1,500, P1,000, P500 and P150.

Sponsors are Alpha Hotel, Crystal Clear Mineral Water, SM City Batangas, Dunkin' Donuts, Shakey's Batangas, Juan Carlo the Caterer, The Alps Bus, Spirit Radio 99.1, Rep. Hermilando Mandanas, Gov. Armando Sanchez, Vice Gov. Ricky Recto, Club Noah and Days Hotel.

Other Powerheads Phils. officers are Vanessa Aquino, senior vice president; Kristine Dimacuha, vice president for finance; Angelo Balmes, vice president for marketing; and Jonathan Balmes, vice president for operations.

Members of the committee on the construction of the Basilica Pastoral Center are Angelito Ababao, Dr. Isabel Ilao, lawyer Dennis Macatangay, Nani Aquino, Dinah Perez, Marilyn Boongaling, Nila Olivario and Tessie Rosales-Pastor. Advisers are Msgr. Rafael Oriondo, Fr. Jojo Gonda, Fr. Joe Castañeda and the parish priest, Fr. Cecilio Arce.

'Nginiiig' first

ABS-CBN'S "NGINIIIG," the country's first horror docu-drama show, introduces the first "logoserye" in local TV history.

For eight weeks, the story of the mysterious hand of "Nginiiig" unveils through the show's bumpers, the boards shown before and after commercial gaps. The last installment of the "logoserye" will be shown on March 5, Nginiiig's first anniversary.

The drawing contest "Sino Siya? Lagyan ng mukha ang kamay ng Nginiiig" will be launched tomorrow, Jan. 15. Big prizes await the winners.

"Nginiiig," now on its fourth season, airs every Saturday after "Y Speak."

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2	BLADE: TRINITY	OCEAN'S 12	RAISE YOUR VOICE	OCEAN'S 12 11:00, 1.10, 3.40, 6.10, 8.40	GUARANTEED SEATS THX OCEAN'S 12 2.00, 4.30	BLADE: TRINITY
3	KUNG FU HUSTLE	BLADE: TRINITY	GUARANTEED SEATS THX OCEAN'S 12		GUARANTEED SEATS IN SEARCH OF AN IMPOTENT MAN 1.05, 3.10, 5.15, 7.20, 9.25, 11.30	ONE MISSED CALL
4	IN SEARCH OF AN IMPOTENT MAN	RAISE YOUR VOICE	IN SEARCH OF AN IMPOTENT MAN		GUARANTEED SEATS RAISE YOUR VOICE 2.00, 4.20, 6.40, 9.00, 11.20	2046
5	RAISE YOUR VOICE		ENTENG KABISOTE		GUARANTEED SEATS BLADE: TRINITY 2.50, 5.00, 7.10, 9.20, 11.30	
6			BLADE: TRINITY			
7			HAPPY TOGETHER			

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January 14 to 31
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Reserve your seats by texting SURESEATS GB3 or SURESEATS [illegible] to 2333 (Globe) or 211 (Smart).
Or log on to www.sureseats.com for web reservations.

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'Lion King' on World of Disney

SHOW TIME

'THE LION King II: Simba's Pride" is tomorrow night's special movie treat on Disney Channel's "Wonderful World of Disney" January series.

The Circle of Life continues as Simba, new king of the Pridelands, assumes a new role as the devoted father of Kiara.

Just as mischievous as her father used to be, Kiara wanders off to the forbidden outlands and runs into big trouble.

Summer fun starts early with the Asian premiere of "The Kids Who Saved Summer" on Jan. 22. Three young friends plan a special summer outing but find out that a factory will soon rise in their little paradise. They proceed instead to save the park.

Scheduled for Jan. 29 is another Asian premiere—"Recess: All Growed Down," starring the kindergarten buddies of Third Street School. The older gang of T.J., Mickey and company come face to face with Chief Stinky, the self-proclaimed kindergarten king.

Screenings are at 7:30 p.m.

Enrollment extended at music school

ENROLLMENT in voice development, voice dynamic and stage performance at the Philippine Music Training School (PMTS) has been extended to Sunday, Jan. 16.

Classes start on Jan. 22.

The school offers 30 sessions and a 35 percent discount on tuition.

It also offers advance lessons in recording techniques and how to become a professional recording artist.

The school is at 117-A S. Macaya Street, Barangay Pasong Tamo, Tandang Sora, Quezon City.

For more information, call Analyn Estinofo at 454-0078.

'Fame' offers better...

From page A4

ployed at the factory, he unleashes in her an unbridled passion that challenges her loyalty to her ancestral heritage.

Gwen Stefani

GWEN Stefani, frontwoman and songwriter for the hit group No Doubt, has gone solo by way of the album titled "Love. Angel. Music. Baby."

The album's lead single, "What You Waiting For?," produced by **Nellee Hooper**, is an insistent, spiky new wave dance track. Another standout cut is the mid-tempo love song "Cool," produced by **Dallas Austin**.

Stefani is also making her mark in the movies. She makes her film debut as actress Jean Harlow in the **Leonardo DiCaprio** starrer, "The Aviator."

GWEN STEFANI

MOVIE GUIDE

NOW SHOWING

CINEMA 2000
Movie Theatres of the New Millenium

Cinema 2000 Target Mall
(Sta. Rosa, Laguna) tel (049) 837.0926
1 RESERVED
2 RESERVED
3 (DTS) RESERVED

Cinema 2000 Waltermart
(Calamba) tel (049) 545.7383
1 OCEAN'S TWELVE
2 (DTS) SO HAPPY TOGETHER
3 (DOLBY) BLADE TRINITY
4 KUNG FU HUSTLE

Cinema 2000 Pavilion Mall
(Biñan) tel (049) 411.1146
1 SO HAPPY TOGETHER
2 (DOLBY) BLADE TRINITY
3 (DTS) OCEAN'S TWELVE
4 KUNG FU HUSTLE

Cinema 2000 Cinemagix
(Urdaneta) tel(075) 568.6771
1 SO HAPPY TOGETHER
2 ENTENG KABISOTE
3 (DOLBY) SPIRIT OF THE GLASS

Lianas MovieCity
(Calamba) tel (049) 545.7202
1 (DOLBY) KUN FU HUSTLE
2 SO HAPPY TOGETHER
3 (DTS) OCEAN'S TWELVE
4 ENTENG KABISOTE
5 BLADE TRINITY

Mega Center Mall
(Cabanatuan City) tel (044) 463.3283
1 SO HAPPY TOGETHER
2 SPIRIT OF THE GLASS
3 (DTS) ENTENG KABISOTE
4 (DOLBY) BLADE TRINITY

Fiesta World Mall
(Lipa) tel (043) 981.0790
1 ENTENG KABISOTE
2 SO HAPPY TOGETHER
3 OCEAN'S TWELVE
4 PANAGHOY SA SUBA

Cinema 2000 Metrotown
(Tarlac) tel (045) 982.1729
1 ENTENG KABISOTE
2 SO HAPPY TOGETHER
3 (DOLBY) PANAGHOY SA SUBA
4 (DTS) SIGAW

Jade Cinema
(Angeles City) tel (045) 887.5001 to 03
1 (DOLBY EX) KUNG FU HUSTLE
2 BLADE TRINITY
3 (DTS ES) OCEAN'S TWELVE
4 SO HAPPY TOGETHER

Cine Nepo
(Angeles City) tel (045) 887.0121
1 HAPPY TOGETHER
2 BLADE TRINITY
3 (DOLBY) KUNG FU HUSTLE
4 (DTS) OCEAN'S TWELVE

Cine Nepo
(Dagupan City) tel (075) 515.8489
1 AISHITE IMASU 1941
2 ENTENG KABISOTE
3 (DOLBY) ALEXANDER
4 (DTS) SPIRIT OF THE GLASS

Centre Plaza Cinema
(Balanga, Bataan) tel (047) 237.7007
1 SKY CAPTAIN
2 SHARK TALE

Cinema 2000 Waltermart
(Plaridel) tel (044) 7953320
1 KUN FU HUSTLE
2 SO HAPPY TOGETHER
3 (DOLBY) ENTENG KABISOTE

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• REGIONAL CINEMAS •

STA. ROSA (049) 837-0907
1 OCEAN'S TWELVE
2 BLADE TRINITY
3 ENTENG KABISOTE
4 SO...HAPPY TOGETHER
5 KUNG FU HUSTLE

LIPA (043) 757-3664 (043) 312-5870
1 CELLULAR
2 SO...HAPPY TOGETHER
3 PANAGHOY SA SUBA
4 SAPLOT
5 OCEAN'S TWELVE

DASMARIÑAS (046) 852-2126 (046) 416-4332
1 SO...HAPPY TOGETHER
2 OCEAN'S TWELVE
3 SALAT SA LIGAYA
4 BAD SANTA
5 KUNG FU HUSTLE

ANGELES (045) 892-2348
1 BLADE TRINITY
2 SEED OF CHUCKY
3 KUNG FU HUSTLE
4 OCEAN'S TWELVE

IMUS (046) 875-3838 (046) 471-8188
1 KUNG FU HUSTLE
2 SO...HAPPY TOGETHER
3 OCEAN'S TWELVE
4 BLADE TRINITY
5 ENTENG KABISOTE
6 THE GHOST

STARMILLS (045) 875-1927 (045) 961-5270
1 OCEAN'S TWELVE
2 SALAT SA LIGAYA
3 SEED OF CHUCKY
4 SO...HAPPY TOGETHER
5 BLADE TRINITY
6 KUNG FU HUSTLE

BACOLOD (034) 441-0453 (034) 441-0459
1 BLADE TRINITY
2 SO...HAPPY TOGETHER
3 OCEAN'S TWELVE
4 GEORGE AND THE DRAGON
5 THE GHOST
6 SUPERBABIES: BABY GENIUSES 2

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3 BIRTH
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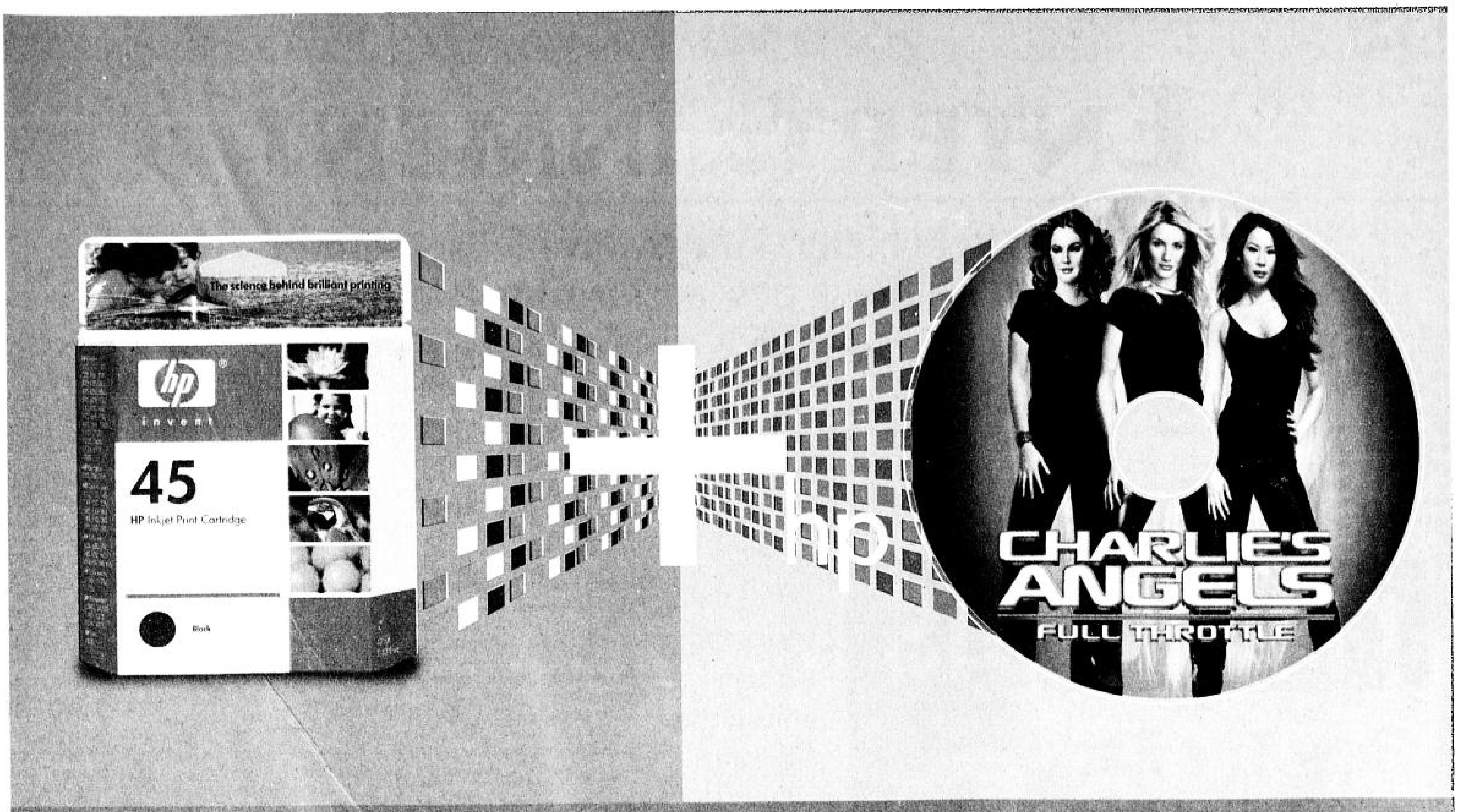
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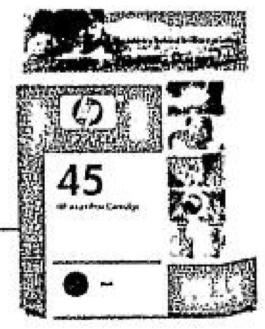

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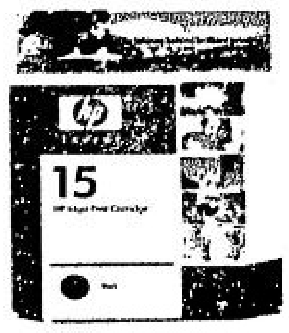

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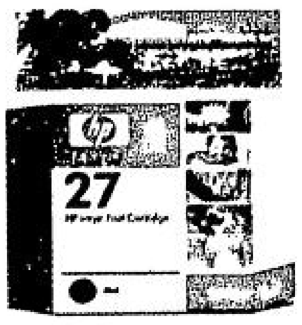

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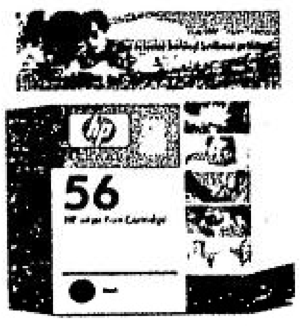

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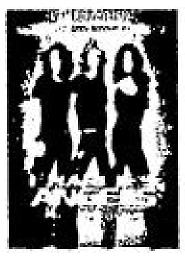

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'Fame' offers better, kinder way of discovering and developing new performing talents

VIEWFINDER

Nestor U. Torre

WE WERE glad we caught the first telecast of the new talent search show, "Fame," last Friday night on the ETC Channel. The program offered a lot of treats, not the least of which was its surprisingly kind and encouraging way of relating to its contestants.

We say surprising, because **Simon Cowell** on "American Idol" and all of his relentlessly nasty clones on local TV talent searches have made it "in" for talent search jurors to be bitchy, scathing and downright cruel in their comments.

On "Fame," host-producer **Debbie Allen** offers wonderfully heartening contrast with her much more supportive approach, which encourages contestants to do their absolute best. This is much better, and we hope other talent-search jurors will emulate it.

This is much better and we hope other jurors emulate it

Cowell, Shmowell! Debbie Allen has the real inside track on how best to discover and develop tomorrow's stars.

No wonder, "Fame's" 24 semi-finalists look and sound more promising than "American Idol's" best bets. Talents need to be encouraged rather than criticized "to death," so that their abilities can genuinely flower.

"Fame" offers other positive improvements on "AI's" and even "Star Search's" formats and procedures. For one thing, it's raised its age limit to something like 39, so it casts a wider net for talent, and thus comes up with a more diverse group of finds.

Even more strikingly, it auditions new performers not just for their singing talent, but also for dancing and star quality.

Thus, it bills its 24 semi-finalists as "triple threat" contenders, prime candidates for stardom not just in pop entertainment, but also in musical theater, where precisely that combination of skills is required.

The new talent search also has a different elimination process: After its 24 best bets are selected during auditions in New York, Miami, Chicago and Los Angeles, they are put into groups of six, with each group performing for celebrity jurors, who choose three of the six to move up to the next round, etc.

This seems to be a good approach, because it enables contestants to do fuller performances, and gives jurors a more limited field of talents to focus on each time.

Last Friday, we saw all 24 semi-finalists performing as a group, with 10-second slots devoted to each talent—and the effect of their performance was overwhelming.

We marvelled at their prodigious combination of performing abilities, enthusiasm, and thrilling way of selling their song.

Contrastingly, we also caught parts of two local TV talent searches that night, and the local bets came off as disappointingly weak, nervous and unprepared. Clearly, we have a long, long way to go for our amateur talents to measure up to international performing standards!

In the case of the local talent searches, this is because the finalists are chosen more for their looks, cuteness and "*kilig* factor" than for their performing talent.

On "Fame," some of the semi-finalists don't look beautiful or handsome, but they more than make up for that "imperfection" with the astounding talent and great personality.

It looks like we'll be viewing Debbie Allen's upbeat talent competition every Friday on ETC from here on in. Try catching it yourself tonight.

'Red Firecracker, Green Firecracker'

"ABC Cinema" on Channel 5 will screen "Red Firecracker, Green Firecracker" by **He Ping** on Saturday, Jan. 15. The film won as Best Feature Film in the 1994 Hawaii International Film Festival, and the Silver Seashell award for Best Actress in the San Sebastian filmfest (for **Hing Jing**).

The tale of forbidden love is set in 1911 China, against the backdrop of the Ching Dynasty's demise. With no male heirs to run their fireworks factory, the Chai family has groomed their beautiful daughter for the role of master, forcing her to dress like a man, and forbidding her to marry.

But, when a rebellious young artist is em-

FAME/ A2

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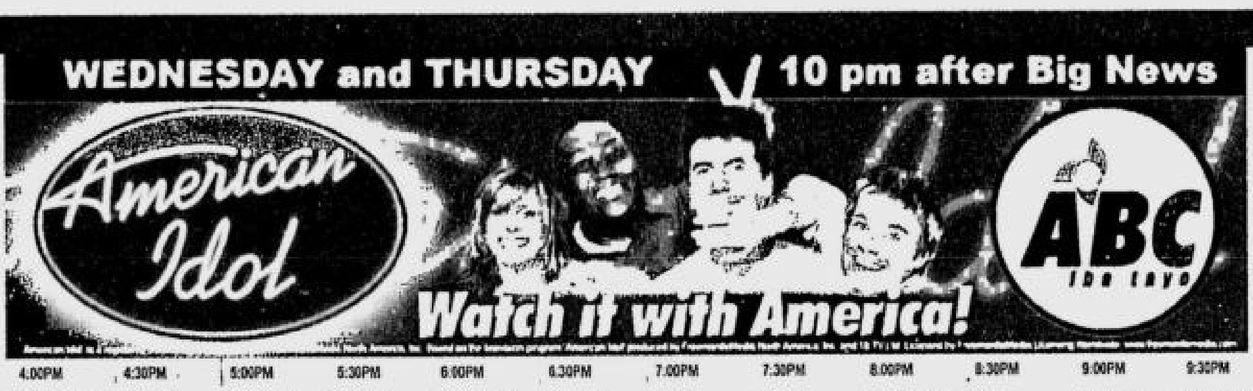

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PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

TV GUIDE

Friday, January 14, 2005

Channel	2:30PM	3:00PM	3:30PM	4:00PM	4:30PM	5:00PM	5:30PM	6:00PM	6:30PM	7:00PM	7:30PM	8:00PM	8:30PM	9:00PM	9:30PM	10:00PM	10:30PM	11:00PM	11:30PM
ABS-CBN 2				Showbiz No. 1	Sandara's Romance	Get Backers	Ragnarok	Masked Rider Ryuki	TV Patrol	Spirits	Krystala	Lovers In Paris	Hiram	Star Circle National Teen Quest	Star Circle Nat'l Teen Quest Elims Special			Insider	Private I
NBN	Value Vision	Value Vision		Value Vision	Teledyaryo	Value Vision		Gold & Glory In Greece	The Working President	Network Forum		Teledyaryo		Mosconi Cup 2003				Ugnayang Pambansa	
ABC 5			Problema Nyo, Sagot Ko	PBA Game-Bel	PBA				Sentro	PBA					Big News	Secrets	TNA Impact		Billboard On-Air
GMA 7	Leya (2:45 PM)	Joyride (3:15 PM)	Snow Angel (3:45 PM)		One Piece	Witch Hunter Robin	Slam Dunk	24 Oras		Extra Challenge		Mulawin	Starstruck (8:45 PM)	Forever In My Heart (9:15 PM)		Bubble Gang			Saksi
RPN 9	Metro TV Shopping			Hey Arnold!	As Told By Ginger	Wild Thornberries	Sponge Bob	Entertainment Tonight	Just For Laughs	Enterprise		Monk		Dead Zone		Newswatch Now			
IBC 13		V League				IBC Express Balita		Lifestyle		Retro TV		Global Family Series		D.E.N.R.		Pulis Na Palaban	IBC News Tonite	GMA The Working President	
Solar		WWE Velocity		Thunder Box		Restol	Ozzy & Drix	Mucha Lucha!	Avengers	Deep Space Nine		WWE Smackdown				WWE Velocity		Wow	
Nickelodeon	Dora, The Explorer	Little Bear	Blues Clues	SpongeBob SquarePants	All That	Are You Afraid of the Dark?	100 Deeds of Eddie McDowd	The Amanda Show	The Adventures Jimmy Neutron	Fairly Odd Parents	SpongeBob SquarePants	As Told By Ginger	Nick Mix		100 Deeds of Eddie McDowd				Rugrats
MYX		Urban MYX		Pop MYX	OPM MYX	Take 5	My MYX	MYX Daily Top Ten		Mellow MYX	Rock MYX	Pop MYX	Urban MYX	Star MYX	Club MYX	My MYX	MYX Backtrax	OPM MYX	Mellow MYX
ETC		What I Like About You	JKX	The Today Show		Starting Over		NBC Nightly News	Entertainment Tonight	Will & Grace	What I Like About You	Iron Chef		Star Search		Tonight Show With Jay Leno		Blind Date	Fifth Wheel
Cinema One		Yes Darling (Walang Matigas Na Pulis 2)				Kaputol Ng Isang Awit				Honey Nasa Langit Na Ba Ako			Review Night	Hawak Ko Buhay Mo				Ticket	
Studio 23								Teen Titans	Justice League	Wazzup Wazzup	Spider-Man The Animated Series	Miss Match		Playing It Straight		News Central	The Oprah Winfrey Show		Yes Dear
AXN		The Devil's Own					30 Seconds To Fame	Gensomaden Saiyuki	Gensomaden Saiyuki	7 Days		The Right Stuff II	Rated X	Cold Squad		Cruel And Unusual			
Star World		The Bold & The Beautiful		Hollywood Squares	Home Improvement	Ally McBeal		The Simpsons	The Drew Carey Show	Star News Asia	Friends	TNA Wrestling		Totally Outrageous Behavior Caught On Tape	When Hidden Cameras Attack/ Weird TV	Ultimate Force		Friends	Totally Outrageous Behavior Caught On Tape
CNN				Business International		Larry King Live		World News	World Sport	Business International		World News Asia		World News	World Sport	World News Asia		World News	World Sport
National Geographic	On Assignment	NG Sea		Weather Gone Mad	Seismic Seconds	The Volcano that Blew the World Away		The Snake Wranglers	Croc Chronicles With Dr Brady Barr	Wild		About Asia		National Geographic Specials		NG Sea		Weather Gone Mad	Seismic Seconds
Solar Sports		FIVB Grand Prix Brazil vs. Cuba			Sounds of the Finals		GWS ep.54	Michael Jordan Tribute				In This Corner		NBA Game Utah @ Sacramento					GWS ep.55
Lifestyle Network	Country Style	Interiors By Design	Decorating With Style	Decorating Cents	Molto Mario	Sweet Dreams	30 Minute Meals	Bill Boggs Corner	Unwrapped	Ming's Quest	Revealed With Jules Asner		New York Nick	Guess Who's Coming To Decorate		Road & Track	Back To Basics	Napoleon Part 2	
HBO	Three Days To A Kill (2:45 PM)			She's Having A Baby (4:15 PM)				Grace Quigley			Solo			Mission Impossible				Primal Fear (10:50PM)	
Star Movies	The Paradise Virus (2:40 PM)			Rent Control (4:10 PM)			My Big Fat Greek Wedding				Vampires Kiss (7:20 PM)			Hannibal				Lord Of Flies (11:10PM)	
Cartoon Network	Scooby-Doo Show	The All New Popeye Show		Tom & Jerry Show	Baby Looney Tunes	Sylvester & Tweety Mysteries	Police Academy	Premiere	Toon Pick	Yu-Gi-Oh!	Zoids Fuzors	The Looney Tunes Show		The Grim Adventures Of Billy & Mandy	Courage The Cowardly Dog	Justice League		Aqua Teen (11:15PM)	Yu-Gi-Oh!
ESPN				Atlantic Coast Conference Basketball				Goal!	World Pool Masters '04 Ann Zoo, Holland		NFL Playoffs Afc Wildcard						Sportscenter Taiwan	Eng. Premier League Preview	Sportscenter Asia
Disney Channel	Kim Possible	Totally Spies	Lizzie Mcguire	Even Stevens	That's So Raven	Martin Mystery	Totally Spies	The Legend Of Tarzan	Lilo & Stitch/Untalkative Bunny	America's Funniest Home Video	Wonderful World Of Disney			My Wife And Kids	That's So Raven	According To Jim	America's Funniest Home Video	Wonderful World Of Disney	
Cinemax			Free Willy				Betrayal			Chungking Lanes (7:15 PM)				Hercules And Amazon Women			The One		
Hallmark Channel	Mad About You	Fabio Montale II				Play With Me Sesame	Sesame Street		Bewitched	Agency II		Sue Thomas: F.B.Eye		Cactus Kid			Child Of Our Time (10:35PM)		Agency II (11:25PM)
Discovery Channel		Power Zone				Wild Discovery		Ultimate Discovery		Junkyard Wars		Mythbusters		Wild Science		Ultimate Discovery		Crime Night	
MTV Philippines		Whatever Things		Non-Stop Hits		Non-Stop Hits		MTV Get Spotted	MTV Loveline	Non-Stop Hits	Non-Stop Hits	MTV Brand New	Be Seen @ MTV			Newlyweds		VH1 Hits/ Video Collection	
Sports Plus	FED Cup SFinal Russia vs Austria					Raceworld		NFL Gameday	Porsche md 5&6	World Poker Tour Episode1				NFL Gameday	Inside the PGA	Golf Globe 2002	Sony Open in Hawaii 1st rd		
EWTN	Does The Church Still Teach That	Angelus (3:15 PM)	Stations Of The Cross	Image Of God	Faith Factory	The Holy Rosary With Mother Angelica and the Nuns Of Our Lady Of Angels Monastery	Search And Rescue	Your Call	EWTN Gallery	Life on The Rock Encore		Gospel Of Life In Health Care	Defending Life	Daily Mass		Angelus (10:15PM)	Backstage	Father Corapi And The Catechism Of The Catholic Church	

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Peso sustains rally

By Doris C. Dumlao

THE PESO yesterday continued to gain ground against the US dollar to close at 55.67, up from Wednesday's 55.91, as foreign investors scrambled to take advantage of the rising yields on government debt papers.

Confident that the interest rate differential with the US was still attractive as manifested by the peso's appreciation, the Monetary Board of the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas decided to keep its policy rates steady during its monetary policy setting yesterday.

The Monetary Board maintained its overnight borrowing or reverse repurchase rate at 6.75 percent and the overnight lending or repurchase rate at 9 percent.

"The MB believed that the outlook for inflation and other economic evidence continued to support the argument for keeping present policy rates unchanged. While current inflation is on the rise, future inflation is likely to be on a downtrend," BSP Governor Rafael Buenaventura said.

He said the inflation rate this year would likely go down after the first quarter and reach 5 percent in the fourth quarter, even as it would exceed the 4-5 percent full-year target.

Buenaventura said the current inflationary pressures would be best addressed by non-monetary intervention that would facilitate production, timely importation, distribution and delivery of key commodities.

The BSP chief said it was hard to say whether the peso's rebound could be sustained the rest of the year.

"But it's good because now we're appreciating alongside other currencies in the region," Buenaventura said.

Chinatrust Commercial Bank Philippines treasurer Roland Avante said the next support level for the peso-dollar exchange rate would likely be 55.40 to $1.

Avante said there was a recent influx of portfolio inflows to the country.

Meralco to start last phase of ₱30-B refund

By Abigail L. Ho

AFTER months of waiting, Manila Electric Co. finally received an Energy Regulatory Commission order allowing the implementation of the last phase of its P30-billion refund for years of over-billing.

This phase will be implemented in two tranches, with the first to start most likely next month.

In a statement yesterday, Meralco assistant vice president and refund management task force head Leonardo Mabale said the first group to be paid under this phase included 103,425 small commercial and industrial customers entitled to a total refund of almost P2.3 billion.

Other customers covered by this tranche included government hospitals and metered streetlights with a total contracted demand of less than 40 kilowatts. Streetlight customers paying flat rates are likewise included.

According to the ERC order, the refundable amount will be credited to the covered customers' future bills for a period of 18 months starting this month's billing cycle.

But since Meralco received the ERC order only last Jan. 6, Mabale said it would be impossible to implement the refund midway through this month's billing cycle.

Also, he said the Bureau of Internal Revenue had informed Meralco that all customers under the entire fourth phase of the refund scheme would be subjected to certain taxes, with Meralco to serve as withholding agent.

"We hope to clarify these matters with the BIR and ERC at the soonest possible time so we can implement the refund by February at the earliest," he said.

As of end-2004, Meralco has completed processing the refund for 5.1 million active and terminated residential and general service customers, representing 98 percent of customers entitled to a rebate.

The total amount processed stood at around P11.6 billion, or 38 percent of the total refundable amount.

Meralco is now set to implement the fourth and last phase of the Supreme Court-mandated refund for overcharges, said to be accumulated from November 1994 to April 2003.

The last phase, which covers commercial and industrial clients, is the costliest among all the refund phases as this involves some P18.6 billion, more than 60 percent of the total refundable amount.

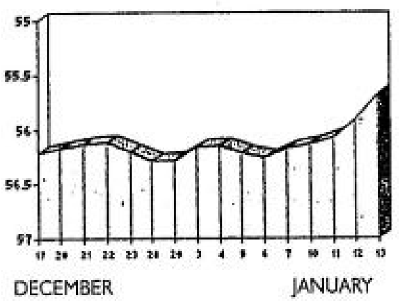
Following the release of the order covering the first tranche of the last phase of the refund, the ERC ordered Meralco to submit its proposal for the second tranche of the last phase of the scheme.

Meralco had proposed to refund customers covered by the fourth phase either through crediting the amount to their future bills or the issuance of "refund notes" or zero coupon bonds maturing in 63 months.

INDICATORS

CURRENCIES

PESO-DOLLAR RATE



₱ 55.67= $ 1

As of 5 p.m., Jan. 13, 2005

¥ 102.35 = $ 1

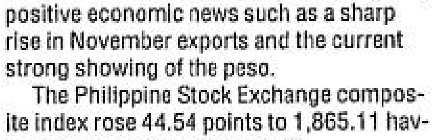
As of 5 p.m., Jan. 13, 2004

GOLD: $ 426.40-426.90

per ounce Hong Kong, Jan. 13, 2005

STOCK MARKET

PSE COMPOSITE INDEX



(See stock market report on Page B3)

Shares close 2.45% higher on technical rebound

SHARE prices yesterday closed 2.45 percent higher on a sharp technical rebound with investors busy bargain hunting following recent heavy falls, dealers said.

They said investors were also positioning themselves in stocks expected to report strong profits for 2004, and were buoyed by positive economic news such as a sharp rise in November exports and the current strong showing of the peso.

The Philippine Stock Exchange composite index rose 44.54 points to 1,865.11 having traded to a low of 1,820.57.

Turnover was 1.67 billion shares valued at P1.59 billion from 1.77 billion shares worth P1.23 billion on Wednesday.

The broader all-shares index fell 10.13 points to 1,156.48.

Gainers beat losers 61 to 12, with 43 stocks unchanged.

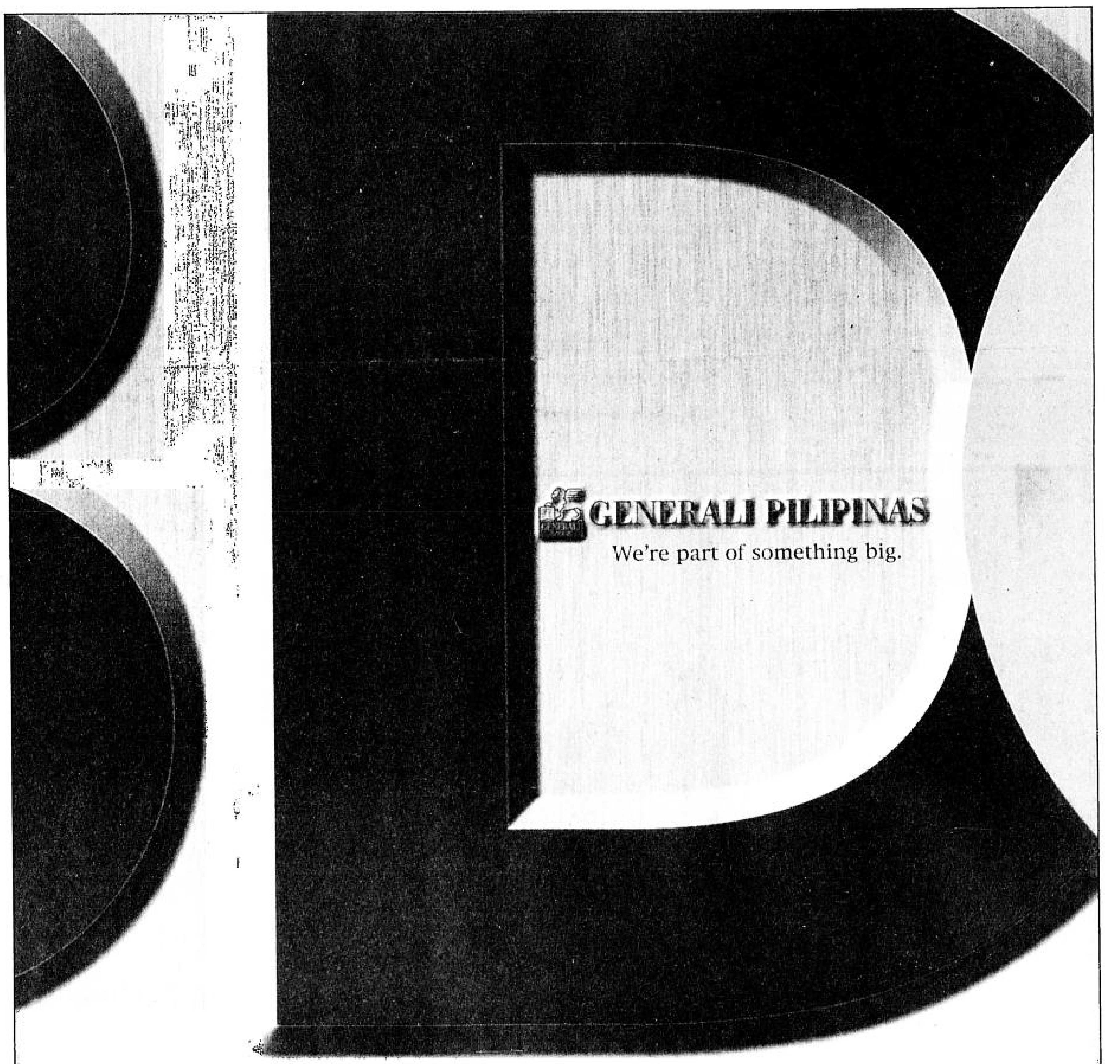
"Some investors are already taking aggressive positions on select blue chips, especially those where the share prices remain cheap but are expected to deliver strong growth in profits relative to the others," said Citiseconline.com analyst Mark Alan Canizares.

He said the market was poised to test its recent near-five year high of 1,879.20 in the coming sessions.

"We went through a very deep decline yesterday and the market sharply rebounded on account of the relatively good economic releases, a fairly strong peso and the robust performance of some blue chips in 2004," Unicapital Securities analyst Elena Ponceca said.

PLDT was the most actively traded stock, up P30 or 2.27 percent at P1,350.

Dealers said aggressive buying emerged after the stock had fallen sharply in recent days. A statement by PLDT chair Manuel Pangilinan—that PLDT was expected to report a 2004 net profit higher than its target of P24 billion—also boosted sentiment towards the stock. *AFP*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Gov't to lose ₱9-B revenue as co-ops retain perks

Michelle V. Remo

THE GOVERNMENT lost the opportunity to collect P9 billion in additional revenue each year after Congress rejected the Palace-backed proposal to withdraw the fiscal incentives granted to cooperatives.

The Lower House denied the proposal which, according to cooperative groups lobbying to reject the plan, would only discourage growth of small sectors of society.

"We expected to collect P9 billion from the proposal to lift the incentives of cooperatives—electric, credit, and non-credit," said Finance Undersecretary Noel Bonoan in an interview with reporters yesterday.

He said officials from the Department of Finance tried to offer a compromise, wherein only cooperatives with assets of at least P10 million would have their incentives lifted. Bonoan added that they also proposed allowing the government to make do with the imposition of a 5-percent gross receipt tax to credit cooperatives that earn by extending loans.

But the lawmakers firmly retained the tax and duty exemptions granted to all cooperatives under the Cooperative Code.

"They said lifting the incentives will discourage credit, but how can that be when it is much easier to get loans from cooperatives than from banks?" Bonoan said.

The proposal to lift the fiscal incentives of cooperatives—which enjoy income tax holiday and duty-free importation—was part of the Arroyo administration's fiscal reform agenda of rationalizing the granting of fiscal incentives. The executive is pushing for the repeal of several special laws that grant incentives to various sectors.

Bonoan said the rejection of the proposal to lift their fiscal incentives might affect the separate proposal of the DOF to impose value-added tax on cooperatives. He said cooperatives might use the same argument of "burdening the masses" when they argue against the VAT plan.

"The effect on the masses has been a convenient excuse," Bonoan said. "But the fundamental principle here is that, if one has the ability to pay taxes, then why should it be exempted when all others are taxed?"

ADB raises concern over RP tax measures

By Doris C. Dumlao

THE ASIAN Development Bank yesterday expressed concern over the new tax reform measures shaping up in Congress as well as the slow pace of fiscal consolidation in the Philippines.

Thomas Crouch, ADB country director, told reporters during an economic forum held by the Foreign Correspondents Association of the Philippines that the country must resolve the uncertainties in the legislative measures needed to beef up the government's revenue collection.

Crouch said there was likewise an urgent need to look at the quality of the tax measures being mapped out in order to get a "better feel" of the fiscal consolidation program.

He said the bank was concerned whether the new initiatives would be sufficient to shore up the government's tax to gross domestic product (GDP) ratio.

Crouch cited the deficiency of the new "sin" taxes in providing for regular adjustment of tax rates relative to inflation.

He said the failure to legislate an automatic indexation to inflation of excise taxes on alcoholic drinks and cigarettes meant that the government would still have to go back to Congress to update the pricing structure in the future.

"Not everyone agrees with the course taken by the administration which has given emphasis on new tax legislation," Crouch said.

He noted some people believed that improving tax administration without legislating new taxes would be enough to arrest the government's fiscal deterioration.

But ADB officials say that there is a need to introduce new tax measures, and that the measures must be accompanied by improvements in collection efficiency, according to Crouch.

"The government cannot rely on existing taxes," he said.

"High quality" measures mean that the new taxes should create less economic distortions and have a long-lasting beneficial effect.

A visiting International Monetary Fund mission also expressed concern over the watered down tax bills emerging in Congress.

But Crouch said he was glad that the urgency for adjustment had spurred a vibrant debate on the appropriate fiscal reforms.

Aside from the recently passed legislation on excise taxation, the Congress bicameral conference committee is now finalizing a lateral attrition bill, which provides for transfer in post or assignment from government service officials and employees of revenue collection agencies who fail to meet collection targets.

It also provides for performance standards and review mechanism as well as incentives to boost collection performance by the Bureau of Internal Revenue, Bureau of Customs and Land Transportation Office.

The government hopes to generate at least P80 billion in additional annual revenues from its proposed package of new tax measures.

Waking up

By Ernesto M. Ordoñez

COMMENTARY

MEMBERS of the defunct Cabinet Oversight Committee Against Smuggling (Cocas), under Interior Secretary Angelo Reyes, were well praised for their leadership and how they exercised their political will.

This was what three private sector convenors had in mind when they formed the Multi-sector Coalition Against Smuggling (MCAS). They wanted to continue the functions of the Cocas which was abolished on Sept. 8, 2004.

The first act of the convenors was to press for the restoration of Cocas and two other anti-smuggling bodies that had also been abolished.

Cocas restoration

Last Dec. 14, the newly restored Cocas held its first meeting.

During the three months when the Cocas was non-existent, the MCAS carried on much of the Cocas work. But the work of the private sector did not amount to much because, without Cocas, action in sensitive areas was often slower than desired.

There were times when Bureau of Customs (BOC) officials were being maliciously misled by some of their subordinates. But with the Cocas now restored and the MCAS convenors regularly invited to participate in their meetings, it is hoped that this situation will soon be remedied.

It is to the credit of government agencies, such as the BOC, the Department of Finance, the Department of Agriculture (DA), and the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI), that significant achievements in the campaign against smuggling have been made.

Examples are the Customs Administrative Orders that provided private sector participation in critical BOC activities to ensure transparency, as well as raids on suspected smuggling lairs in coordination with the MCAS.

For these activities, we especially commend BOC Commissioner George Jereos, former Deputy Commissioner Ray Allas, Deputy Commissioner Rey Nicolas, and Director Jairus Paguntalan.

A success story

During the second Cocas meeting last Dec. 21, the Alyansa Agrikultura was asked to chair a new Cocas committee on technical smuggling done through under-valuation. This is a common concern that unites agriculture, industry and civil society.

There is a $10-billion discrepancy between the exports to the Philippines, as reported by our trading partners, and the BOC report of our imports.

The difference is due to outright or technical smuggling. Once this is stopped, government revenue from the foregone tariffs and taxes may amount to at least P84 billion a year.

This will certainly be a great help in addressing our fiscal deficit.

Manuel Ong, head of the Chamber of Philippine Welding Manufacturers Inc., believes that under-valuation accounted for a great portion of the missing $10 billion. During the Cocas valuation committee's first meeting on Jan. 4, Ong said that welding electrodes from China currently sold for $530 a ton. However, unscrupulous importers have been under valuing this at $90 to $120.

One such importer brought in 480 tons of electrodes, valued at $120 a ton, which a BOC assessor officially approved.

As a general practice, these assessors meet with an importer with no one else in the room and are given discretion in approving import valuations.

Even when the value is much lower than world market prices for the product, the assessors would say they are forced to follow the World Trade Organization (WTO) rule requiring "transaction value" as the only basis for valuation.

Since March 2000, when the Societe Generale de Surveillance (SGS) stopped giving world reference prices as a Customs valuation basis, BOC assessors have been accepting very low transaction values for imported products. These are often contained in counterfeit documents.

But since there is a lack of check and balance, the result is loss of government revenue, precious jobs, and investor confidence.

The first and fourth largest welding electrode companies in the world, namely Lincoln Electric and Sigweld, told Ong they closed their factories in Novaliches and Cebu because of this BOC practice.

Lincoln Electric is seen to move to Vietnam while Sigweld has moved to Indonesia, two countries which do not engage in this practice.

Ong says that this under-valuation, institutionalized by the BOC, has severely affected countless industrial and agricultural enterprises.

The solution

Since I used to be vice president for Asia of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (Unctad), I was fully aware that Customs officials of some countries wrongly interpret the WTO rules for their unscrupulous advantage.

Lawyer Napoleon Ng of the Federation of Philippine Industries showed our valuation committee the WTO's Article 17. This states that countries' customs administrations have the right to "satisfy themselves as to the truth and accuracy of any statement, document or declaration."

Several countries, such as Romania, Brazil, India and Mexico, are using reference prices to serve as a screen for identifying grossly under valued "transaction values." In our current BOC system, this is not the case.

During the same meeting, Deputy Commissioner Nicolas said he agreed to use reference prices as a mandatory guideline for screening transaction value documents.

Any significant discrepancy would have to go to a BOC committee where private sector representatives would be allowed as observers for the sake of transparency.

Three days ago, a signed Customs Administrative Order, institutionalizing this new procedure, was given to the Cocas.

Conclusion

The successful example presented here is just one of many areas where strength of resolve and the political will of top government officials make a difference.

It is hoped that Secretary Reyes and the other Cocas cabinet secretaries will continue this kind of support to agriculture, industry, and civil society. Then, our country can wake up and see a promising dawn with the interests of the nation, rather than the individual, prevailing.

(The author is the chair of Agriwatch, a private sector initiative; former undersecretary of Agriculture and Trade and Industry, and former chair and Cabinet secretary for Presidential Flagship Programs and Projects. For inquiries and suggestions, email agriwatchphil@yahoo.com or telefax 02-8516635.)

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Contract Package Name and Location	Scope of Works	IAC Category and Classification	PCAB License Category	Approved Budget for the Contract (ABC) / Source of Funds	Project Duration
Upgrading of Electrical System for MB Units to Accommodate ACU Load (PNP/NAPOLCOM Awarded Units) Pamayanang Diego Silang, Ususan, Taguig City, M. M.	• Replacement of Main Circuit Breaker • Supply & Installation of Feeder Lines • Other Related Works	At Least Medium "A" for Distribution Lines	At Least Category "B"	Php 12,099,669.57	Ninety (90) calendar days

Prospective Contractors should have completed a similar contract for Upgrading/Installation of Electrical System to accommodate ACU load for MRB housing units.

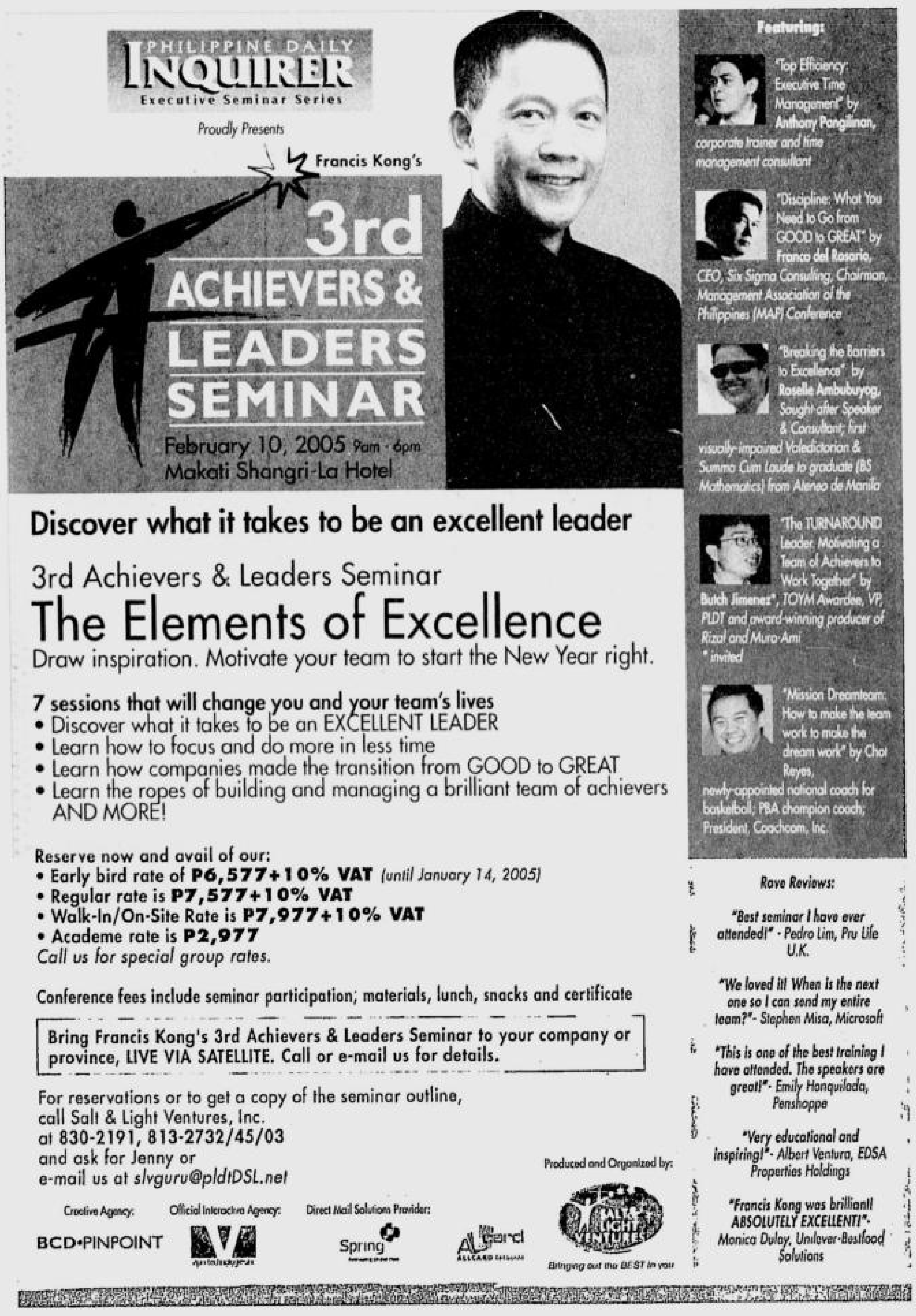
Applications for Eligibility (legal, technical and financial documents and statements) shall be evaluated using "PASS/FAIL" criteria set forth in the Instructions to Applicants for Eligibility and to Bid. Only Eligible Bidders shall be invited by BMHI to participate in the bidding. All bids equal to or lower than the ABC shall be evaluated based on the contractor's offer for the contract under bidding, and shall be subject to detailed evaluation, and the lowest responsive bidder to Post-qualification before any award is made. Bid prices submitted higher than the ABC shall be rejected and returned outright.

Application for Eligibility and Eligibility Forms will be available for issuance at the *Small Conference Room, Main Lobby BCDA Corporate Center, 2/F Bonifacio Technology Center 31st Street Corner 2nd Avenue, Crescent Park West, Bonifacio Global City, Taguig City, Metro Manila* before 5:00 PM on January 10 – 19, 2005, upon submission of Letter of Intent (LOI) addressed to the BMHI Procurement Bids and Award Committee (BMHI-PBAC) Chairperson and payment of a non-refundable fee of ONE THOUSAND FIVE HUNDRED PESOS (P1,500.00). Duly accomplished Application for Eligibility and Eligibility Forms shall be submitted not later than January 26, 2005, 5:00pm at the above-mentioned address.

For further information or clarification, please get in touch with Atty. Peter Paul Andrew T. Flores of the BMHI-PBAC at 816-0989.

(Sgd.) GLORIA GEORGINA DJ. JOTA
BMHI-PBAC Chairperson

(PDI--Jan 7 & 14, 2005)



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"Breaking the Barriers to Excellence" by Roselle Ambubuyog, Sought-after Speaker & Consultant; first visually-impaired Valedictorian & Summa Cum Laude to graduate (BS Mathematics) from Ateneo de Manila
"The TURNAROUND Leader: Motivating a Team of Achievers to Work Together" by Butch Jimenez*, TOYM Awardee, VP, PLDT and award-winning producer of Rizal and Muro-Ami
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"Mission Dreamteam: How to make the team work to make the dream work" by Chot Reyes, newly-appointed national coach for basketball; PBA champion coach; President, Coachcom, Inc.

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PHILIPPINE STOCK EXCHANGE

(As of January 13, 2005)

STOCKS	OPEN	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE	VOLUME
BANKS & FINANCIAL SERVICES					
BANKS					
Asiatrust Dev. Bank Inc.	2.85	2.85	2.85	2.85	4,000
Banco de Oro Univ. Bank	25.5	27.5	25.5	27.5	1,702,000
Bank of the Phil. Islands	52.5	53.5	52.5	53.5	2,771,600
China Banking Corp.	560	560	560	560	220
Equitable PCI Bank Inc.	48	48	48	48	1,200
International Exch. Bank	16.25	16.75	16.25	16.75	920,800
Metropolitan Bank & Trust	26	26.5	25.5	26	468,700
Rizal Comm. Banking Corp.	13.5	13.5	13.5	13.5	11,800
Security Bank Corp.	28.5	28.5	27.5	28.5	51,000
Union Bank of the Phil.	23.75	24	23.75	24	36,700
FINANCIAL SERVICES					
Manulife Financial Corp.	2500	2500	2475	2475	370
PCI Leasing & Fin. Inc.	1.36	1.38	1.36	1.38	348,000
Phil. Stock Exchange Inc.	110	110	110	110	50
Sun Life Financial Inc.	1795	1795	1795	1795	380
COMMERCIAL & INDUSTRIAL					
COMMUNICATION					
ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp.	17.75	18	17.75	18	33,800
Diversified Fin. Network	3	3.95	3	3.95	14,000
Digital Telecom Phils Inc.	1.88	1.92	1.88	1.9	19,399,000
Globe Telecom Inc.	900	930	900	930	74,180
Ipeople Inc.	3.6	3.9	3.6	3.9	153,000
ISM Communications Corp.	0.032	0.035	0.032	0.035	1,500,000
Liberty Telecoms Holdings	0.27	0.27	0.27	0.27	80,000
Pilipino Tel. Corp.	3.3	3.35	3.3	3.35	16,910,000
Phil. Long Dis Tel Co.	1335	1355	1335	1350	128,610
Ivantage Corp.	0.63	0.67	0.63	0.66	7,980,000
Philweb Corp.	0.011	0.012	0.011	0.012	7,700,000
POWER & ENERGY					
Manila Electric Co. A	15.25	15.5	15.25	15.5	10,800
Manila Electric Co. B	24.25	24.5	24	24.5	870,700
Patron Corp.	3.4	3.4	3.35	3.4	11,684,000
Salcon Power Corp.	2.2	2.2	2.2	2.2	54,000
Trans-Asia Oil and Energy	1.1	1.14	1.1	1.14	1,062,000
TRANSPORTATION SERVICES					
Aboitiz Trans. Sys. Corp.	1.7	1.7	1.7	1.7	3,000
Int'l Container Term'l Sv	6.4	6.6	6.4	6.6	952,000
Keppel Phils. Marine Inc.	0.36	0.36	0.36	0.36	200,000
CONSTRUCTION & OTHER D PRODUC TS RELATE					
Engineering Equip. Inc.	0.36	0.39	0.36	0.39	260,000
Holcim Philippines Inc.	2.6	2.95	2.6	2.95	15,438,000
Republic Cement Corp.	0.87	0.87	0.87	0.87	240,000
FOOD, BEVERAGES & TOBACCO					
Ginebra San Miguel Inc.	30.5	30.5	30.5	30.5	111,300
Jollibee Foods Corp.	27.5	27.5	27.5	27.5	25,600
San Miguel Corp. A	58	58	58	58	12,600
San Miguel Corp. B	79	79	78	78	38,300
Vitarich Corp.	0.27	0.27	0.27	0.27	250,000
HOLDING FIRMS					
Abacus Con Res & Hdg A	0.0055	0.006	0.0055	0.0055	90,000,000
Abacus Con Res & Hdg B	0.0055	0.0055	0.0055	0.0055	8,000,000
Ayala Corp.	6.8	7.1	6.8	7.1	6,178,000
Aboitiz Equity Ventures	3.25	3.35	3.25	3.3	1,471,000
Ajo.Net Holdings Inc.	0.023	0.024	0.023	0.024	3,500,000
A. Soriano Corp.	1.64	1.68	1.64	1.68	102,000
APC Group, Inc.	0.085	0.09	0.085	0.09	2,200,000
Alcorn Gold Res. Corp.	0.008	0.008	0.008	0.008	15,000,000
ATN Holdings Inc.	1.4	1.4	1.4	1.4	20,000
Baguio Gold Holdings Corp.	1.2	1.2	1.2	1.2	30,000
Balabac Resources & Hldgs	0.8	0.8	0.8	0.8	10,000
Bacnotan Cons Indus Inc.	20.5	23.25	20.5	23	426,400
Benpres Holdings Corp.	0.68	0.7	0.68	0.7	23,760,000
Basic Consolidated Inc.	0.165	0.17	0.165	0.17	340,000
Crown Equities Inc.	0.225	0.225	0.225	0.225	1,380,000
Southeast Asian Cement	0.19	0.19	0.18	0.185	4,870,000
DMCI Holdings Inc.	3.85	4.3	3.85	4.3	20,588,000
Ever-Gotesco Resources	0.03	0.03	0.03	0.03	1,200,000
Filinvest Dev. Corp.	1.06	1.08	1.06	1.08	170,000
Fil-Hispano Holdings Corp.	6.1	6.6	6.1	6.6	2,993,000
First Phil Hldgs Corp.	30.5	31	30.5	31	1,020,800
Global Equities Inc.	0.06	0.06	0.06	0.06	3,000,000
House of Investments Inc.	0.79	0.79	0.79	0.79	3,050,000
J.G. Summit Holdings Inc.	3	3	2.95	3	241,000
Macroasia Corp.	2.32	2.32	2.3	2.3	355,000
Megaworld Corp.	1.24	1.26	1.24	1.26	1,885,000
Metro Pacific Corp.	0.38	0.41	0.38	0.4	97,760,000
Roxas Holdings Inc.	0.85	0.85	0.85	0.85	200,000
Solid Group, Inc.	0.39	0.39	0.39	0.39	50,000
Tanduay Holdings Inc.	2.9	2.9	2.85	2.9	33,000
Uniwide Holdings Inc.	0.135	0.135	0.135	0.135	40,000
Waterfront Phils. Inc.	0.19	0.19	0.19	0.19	400,000
MANUFACTURING, DISTRIBUTION & TRADING					
Active Alliance, Inc.	0.7	0.7	0.7	0.7	10,000
Metro Alliance Hldgs B	0.37	0.37	0.34	0.34	150,000
HOTEL, RECREATION & OTHER SERVICES					
Belle Corp.	0.56	0.63	0.56	0.63	111,370,000
Fairmont Holdings Inc.	0.97	1	0.96	0.98	4,140,000
Leisure & Resorts Corp.	0.52	0.52	0.52	0.52	200,000
Premiere Ent. Prod. Inc.	0.26	0.26	0.26	0.26	300,000
Philippine Racing Club	2.7	2.8	2.7	2.8	40,000
BONDS, PREFERRED & WARRANTS					
ABS-CBN Hldgs. Corp.(Pdr)	18	18	18	18	37,200
Macroasia Corp. Warrants	0.0625	0.0625	0.0575	0.0575	300,000
PROPERTY					
Ayala Land Inc.	7.4	7.7	7.4	7.7	14,576,000
Araneta Properties Inc.	0.27	0.27	0.27	0.27	20,000
Cebu Holdings Inc.	0.5	0.51	0.5	0.51	60,000
C&P Homes Inc.	0.27	0.29	0.27	0.29	23,790,000
Cyber Bay Corp.	0.145	0.15	0.145	0.15	1,720,000
Empire East Land Inc.	0.35	0.37	0.35	0.35	17,580,000
Filinvest Land Inc.	1.14	1.18	1.14	1.18	9,002,000
Kuok Phil. Properties	0.17	0.175	0.17	0.175	2,000,000
Fil-Estate Land Inc.	0.62	0.63	0.62	0.63	1,050,000
MRC Allied Ind. Inc.	0.1	0.18	0.1	0.13	12,570,000
Philippine Estates Corp.	0.0725	0.0725	0.0725	0.0725	700,000
Primex Corp.	2.85	2.85	2.85	2.85	70,000
Robinsons Land Corp.	2.4	2.4	2.4	2.4	30,000
Phil Realty And Holdings	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2	400,000
SM Development Corp.	1.38	1.38	1.36	1.36	275,000
SM Prime Holdings Inc.	7.9	8.1	7.9	8	12,743,000
MINING					
Apex Mining Co. Inc. A	0.42	0.46	0.42	0.46	80,000
Apex Mining Co. Inc B	0.44	0.44	0.44	0.44	100,000
Abra Mining & Industrial	0.013	0.013	0.013	0.013	56,100,000
Atlas Cons. Min & Dev't	4.15	4.15	4.1	4.1	40,000
Dizon Copper Silver Mines	2.1	2.1	2.1	2.1	5,000
Lepanto Cons Mng. Co. A	0.39	0.41	0.39	0.4	15,490,000
Lepanto Cons. Mng. Co B	0.43	0.46	0.43	0.46	13,960,000
Manila Mining Corp. A	0.019	0.02	0.019	0.019	266,400,000
Manila Mining Corp. B	0.025	0.025	0.024	0.025	288,400,000
Omico Corp.	0.005	0.0055	0.005	0.005	223,000,000
Philex Mining Corp. A	0.83	0.83	0.83	0.83	4,130,000
Philex Mining Corp. B	0.84	0.86	0.84	0.85	9,560,000
OIL					
Oriental Pet. & Min. A	0.0055	0.006	0.0055	0.006	165,000,000
Oriental Pet. & Min. B	0.006	0.006	0.006	0.006	30,000,000
The Philodrill Corp. A	0.26	0.27	0.26	0.27	100,000
The Philodrill Corp. B	0.27	0.27	0.27	0.27	700,000
Petroenergy Res. Corp.	2.44	2.44	2.44	2.44	15,000
Sinophil Corp.	0.05	0.055	0.049	0.0525	3,100,000

DISCLOSURES

PHILIPPINE Racing Club Inc. confirmed that it posted gross betting revenues of P4.4 billion in 2004, generated from on-track and off-track bets, and "telebets."

* * *

APC GROUP Inc. offered to sell its subsidiary, Philippine Global Communications Inc., to interested investors.

* * *

ROEL Refran was appointed vice president and general counsel of **Philippine Stock Exchange**, effective March 1.

* * *

PSE WILL hold its annual stockholders' meeting on March 19 at 8 a.m. at the Tektite Trading Floor, PSE Center, Exchange road, Ortigas Center, Pasig City.

* * *

ABOITIZ Equity Ventures Inc. bought 15 million of its own shares at P3.25 each, pursuant to its shares buy-back program. ***Compiled by D.J. Yap, PDI Research***

CURRENCIES

January 13, 2005 Country	Unit	Euro Equivalent	Dollar Equivalent	Peso Equivalent
United States	Dollar	0.753807	1.000000	55.9900
Japan	Yen	0.007362	0.009766	0.5468
United Kingdom	Pound	1.425825	1.891500	105.9051
Hong Kong	Dollar	0.096725	0.128315	7.1844
Switzerland	Franc	0.645825	0.856751	47.9695
Canada	Dollar	0.627858	0.832917	46.6350
Singapore	Dollar	0.461101	0.611696	34.2489
Australia	Dollar	0.578605	0.767578	42.9767
Bahrain	Dinar*	1.999540	2.652590	148.5185
Saudi Arabia	Rial	0.201015	0.266667	14.9307
Brunei	Dollar	0.459694	0.609830	34.1444
Indonesia	Rupiah	0.000082	0.000109	0.0061
Thailand	Baht	0.019413	0.025753	1.4419
UAE	Dirham	0.205268	0.272309	15.2466
Euro	Euro	1.000000	1.326600	74.2763
Argentina	Peso	0.255745	0.339271	18.9958
Brazil	Real	0.279706	0.371058	20.7755
Denmark	Kroner	0.134445	0.178355	9.9861
India	Rupee	0.017317	0.022973	1.2863
Malaysia	Ringgit	0.198397	0.263193	14.7362
Mexico	New Peso	0.067524	0.089578	5.0155
New Zealand	Dollar	0.532877	0.706914	39.5801
Norway	Kroner	0.122054	0.161917	9.0657
Pakistan	Rupee	0.012675	0.016815	0.9415
South Africa	Rand	0.127332	0.168919	9.4578
Korea	Won	0.000724	0.000960	0.0538
Sweden	Kroner	0.110504	0.146595	8.2079
Syria	Pound	0.014521	0.019264	1.0786
Taiwan	Nt Dollar	0.023667	0.031397	1.7579
Venezuela	Bolivar	0.000393	0.000522	0.0292

Ready to serve: Del Monte deal

COCKTALES

Victor C. Agustin

LUCIO Tan will not likely get any right-of-first-refusal hindrance from the Lorenzos of Lapanday/Macondray fame in the taipan's bid to acquire 40 percent of Del Monte Pacific.

Even better, the taipan might even end up buying out the Lorenzos, as well.

According to the pro-taipan grapevine, the Lorenzos, who own 21 percent of the Singapore-listed Philippine company, have already indicated it did not have the cash to match the estimated $180-million bid Tan was offering for the 40-percent stake of Del Monte now being held by Cirio, the floundering Italian food conglomerate.

And, according to the pro-Lorenzo grapevine, the Lorenzos have even chosen to sell their stake along with Cirio to the cash-rich taipan. This account, however, could not be independently verified as of press time.

The tight-lipped taipan was said to be overseas yesterday. Presidential Adviser Luis Lorenzo Jr., on the other hand, was on the way to the airport yesterday afternoon and, in turn, asked his brother Martin, acting chair of Del Monte Philippines, to answer press inquiries. (He never did.)

According to someone who knows the Lorenzo family, the Lorenzos told friends at Christmastime to take advantage of their last vacation at the American-built Del Monte golf course and guest lodge in balmy Bukidnon, "as they (the Lorenzos) had received an offer they could not refuse."

In addition to the 18,600-hectare Mindanao plantation that supplies about 20 percent of the world's processed pineapple, Del Monte Pacific holds the world-famous Del Monte food and beverage franchise in the Philippines and in India.

As well, the Singapore-listed Philippine company has obtained a promising foothold in China.

A Tan son-in-law, Joseph Chua, and former SGV chair Gloria Tan Climaco are said to be providing the taipan investment advice on the Del Monte deal.

Incidentally, Del Monte Pacific has for its auditor Ernst and Young, the international partner of SGV which, in turn, is the audit firm of Tan's publicly listed Philippine firms—MacroAsia, Baguio Gold and Balabac Resources.

Short takes

- THE UNABATED tension at the Hacienda Azucarera de Tarlac has prompted the Cojuangcos to hold the Jan. 25 annual stockholders' meeting in their Legaspi Village building instead.
- The Government Service Insurance System continues to be one of the biggest cherrypickers of the rebounding Equitable PCIBank, with the GSIS stake in EPCIB reaching 12.14 percent at the last count.

Heard through the grapevine

THE LOCAL bourse looks poised for a sustained bull run, that is, if the peso continues to strengthen, the Bangko Sentral maintains its low-interest rate regime, crude oil prices continue their downward trajectory, and the revenue holes finally get plugged.

Judging from the first two weeks of trading, a merrier Christmas is already in the cards for the stockbrokers and punters alike.

(Email: cocktales_pdi@pldtdsl.net or cocktales_pdi@yahoo.com)

APC selling telecom subsidiary

By Elizabeth L. Sanchez

HOLDING firm APC Group Inc. is planning to divest its telecommunications business as it sets its sights on other sectors.

The APC Group yesterday said in a disclosure to the stock exchange that the company would sell its telecommunications subsidiary Philippine Global Communications Inc. to any interested investor.

The subsidiary has posted losses of P6.852 billion to date since 1999, adversely affecting its stockholders' equity, the APC said.

To help facilitate the sale, APC will engage Gregorio Kilayko of ABN Amro Bank as its financial advisor.

Officials at this time could not give an estimate on how much it would stand to gain from the possible sale.

Willy Ocier, APC chair, meanwhile told the INQUIRER that the APC board "as of now" would prefer the full divestment of the company's 74 percent stake in Philcom "so the company can move forward."

"We will explore all possible options to improve our shareholders' position," Ocier said. "With that direction, the company is engaging the services of a financial adviser to provide the options and strategies."

According to the APC chair, the company has been hit by continuing losses in Philcom since 1999.

"The rules of the telecom industry has been changing," Ocier said. "Technology, rates, consumer behavior and the competitive environment are just a few of the reasons why the company is looking elsewhere for its business directions."

In line with this direction, APC recently announced the formation of a subsidiary which would go into oil and gas exploration and development.

APC is 46.6 percent owned by Belle Corp. Aside from telecommunications, the company has investments in cement, manpower outsourcing and other strategic projects.

BSP: '04 portfolio investments to RP dipped

By Doris C. Dumlao

NET INFLOWS of portfolio investments, or "hot" money, to the Philippines slowed down by 1.5 percent to $662 million last year over 2003, bucking the uptrend in East Asia, the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas reported yesterday.

BSP Governor Rafael Buenaventura said he was not satisfied with the portfolio investment performance, given the resurgence of fresh investments in the region.

"It's not good," Buenaventura told reporters after the Monetary Board meeting. "It's lackluster."

In 2003 when the global economic performance was gloomier, net portfolio inflows to the country stood even higher at $672 million.

In general, offshore investors shunned the Philippine market early last year over jitters on the May presidential elections. They remained on the sidelines due to worries over the government's fragile fiscal position and expectations of a sovereign credit rating downgrade.

Portfolio inflows refer to nonresident investments in peso bank deposits, government securities and securities listed on the Philippine Stock Exchange.

Based on the BSP's business expectations survey, business confidence significantly weakened in the last quarter of 2004 as skyrocketing oil prices spooked the usually cheerful Christmas season.

PRULINK	PRU LIFE U.K.	
Investments of Variable Life Insurance Contracts	Current Week January 11, 2005	Last Week January 04, 2005
Bond Fund - Peso	1.17170	1.16453
Managed Fund - Peso	1.26869	1.26589
Bond Fund - US Dollar	1.0730	1.0629

* Note: These investments of variable life insurance contracts are not mutual funds. Life insurance products are regulated by the Insurance Commission

Telco rivalry remains stiff, says Smart

By Clarissa S. Batino

SMART Communications Inc. yesterday said its remittance service had settled more than 450,000 transactions last year, in line with the company's plan to eventually handle up to $3 billion in remittances each year.

Smart said mobile commerce would continue to flourish this year. Its electronic top-up service handles more than P3 million worth of transactions each day. Smart Padala was launched in August 2004, and the electronic load in the second half of 2003.

The country's largest wireless company said it had suited up for stiff competition this year where the battle would be waged even in remote provinces still without telecom services.

Smart is the cash-rich unit of Philippine Long Distance Telephone Co.

Asiamoney named PLDT as the country's best managed company for the second straight year. It was also chosen as the most improved company, and the best in corporate governance.

Napoleon Nazareno, president of PLDT, Smart and Pilipino Telephone Corp. was named best chief executive officer.

Asiamoney, one of the region's most influential publications, said that voters nominated Asian companies in the best-managed category based on market capitalization.

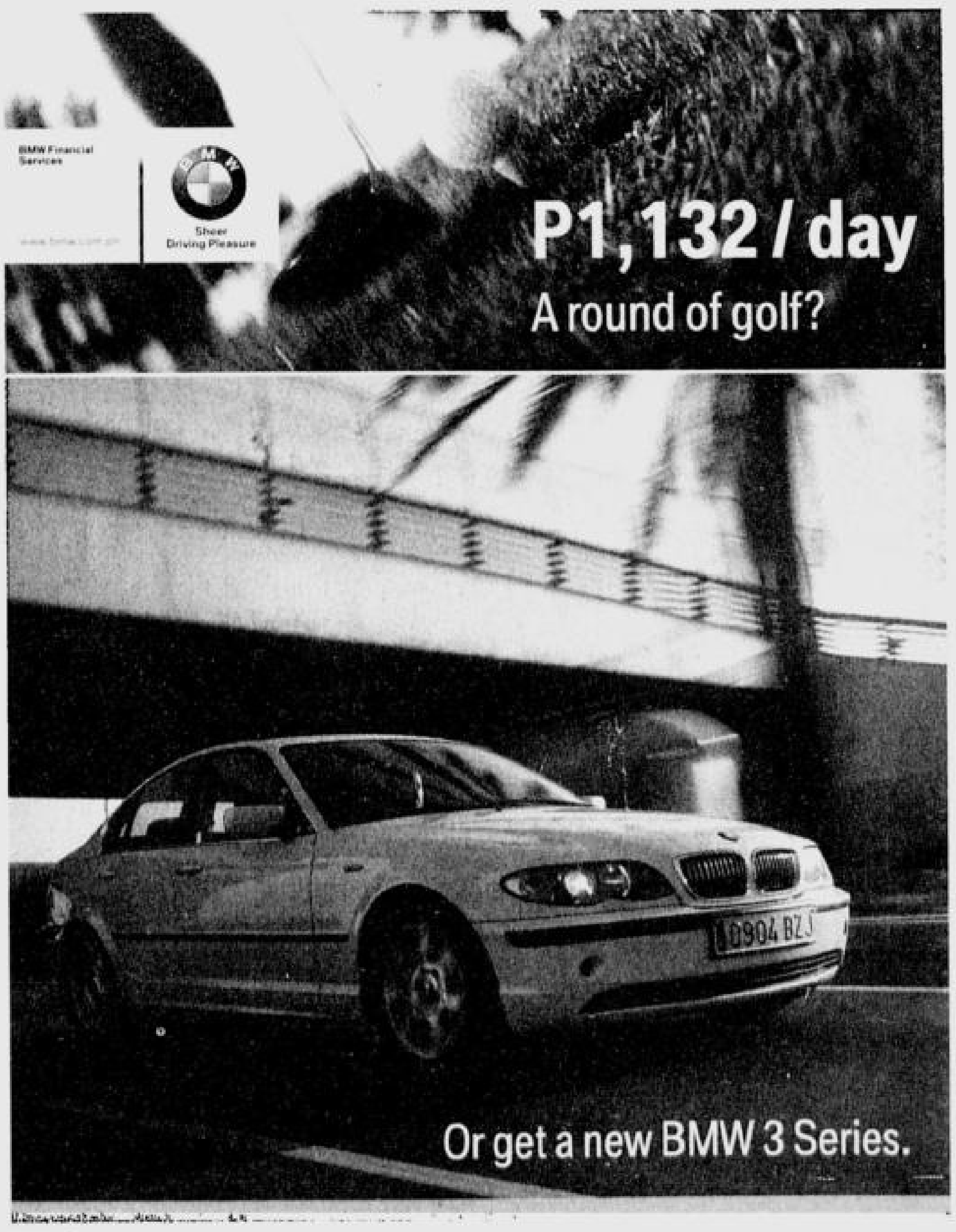
The company, which already covers about 95 percent of the country with more than 5,000 base stations, promises to extend its network to places previously not reached by mobile signal.

Smart believes that the fixed-line services will move toward high-speed data operations.

The PLDT group had acquired a 49-percent stake in Meridian Telekoms Inc., a broadband player formerly controlled by the family of Mark Jimenez.

"Fixed lines will go increasingly broadband as operators push the deployment of their DSL services," Smart said in a statement. "With broadband will come more sophisticated Internet-based services."

Largely owing to Smart's contribution, PLDT is expected to report more than P24 billion in profits last year.



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Shattering the loyalty myths

By Tina Arceo-Dumlao

IT IS such a biblical truth in the fiercely competitive retail industry, that it ought to be carved in stone.

And that is, it costs as much as five to six times more to acquire a new customer than to keep one. Even more if you have to win back disgruntled buyers.

Retail companies, shopping centers, department stores and even manufacturing firms, thus, have invested in programs to build customer loyalty.

The idea is to tighten their hold on the mythical 20 percent of the customer base that brings in 80 percent of the revenue, by giving away privileges such as points for every purchase, freebies and raffle tickets.

Many of these programs, however, end up being long on good intentions, and really short on results.

The reason? Wrong design and implementation, according to Yayu E. Javier, country manager of sales performance solutions company Avanza Inc.

Javier tells Business Friday that based on Avanza's experience in the retail industry, many firms fall prey to costly misconceptions that weakened their loyalty programs.

Not all about points

One misconception is that a loyalty program is all about giving points that can be exchanged later for items, ranging from toys to big-ticket appliances.

In the end, it is about getting valuable customer data.

That data can then be used to help the retailer stock his shelves with the right products and services to suit his loyal customers' profile and behavior.

For instance, if the data culled from the loyalty card users show that they prefer household products in big quantities because they only troop to the grocery once a month, then the retailer will logically stock up on big-sized items and reduce inventory of items in sachets.

The loyalty card users, thus, end up happy and more likely to go back and buy some more.

"The success of a loyalty program is highly dependent on data mining, profiling and doing something with the data. A loyalty program is merely a tool to access consumers or customers," Javier says.

"Once you have acquired your customer data, it is not something you store like expensive china in your cabinet, but something that you use. Your customer data has to be continuously updated so that you will be able to provide the right offer and communication to your members," she adds.

Citibank N.A. is one firm that knows the importance of building up customer data.

citibank
5401 2726 0744
Rustan's
FREQUENT PLUS
08 1 003 042801 5
NERISSA R. REMO
JOINING DATE: 12/04/2003
E-Purse
SHOPWISE
The Wise Card
AMELITA MELISSA R. REMO
0701020024556
MEMBER SINCE 07/23/02

LOYALTY card programs are good investments for retailers, but only if done right.

Under its Christmas raffle promo, for example, Citibank credit card users were required to text their entries to become eligible.

This allowed Citibank to acquire the mobile phone numbers of its customers, which could be used in future promotions or programs.

Redemption programs

Another misconception is that rewards points are enough to attract the customers that a company yearns most to stay loyal.

Points that are exchanged for items can only go so far, because chances are, these customers can afford to buy them anyway.

They are not likely to go through the motions of watching their points accumulate, when they can buy items they want off the shelf.

What some retailers have discovered, Javier says, is that profitable customers participate in loyalty programs because of the prestige and status that go with it.

She says this is especially true for companies that provide tiering in their loyalty program, like silver, gold or platinum.

The higher the level, the more perks or benefits are granted.

"Not only does it signify their purchasing capability, since they have to spend more to earn more points and reach the highest tiering level, but also makes them enjoy the feeling of belonging to an elite group," Javier says.

One of the most popular loyalty programs is Singapore Airlines' Krisflyer program, where top-tier members are allowed to use the First Class lounge even if they travel economy class.

This provides great value to members and prestige of using First Class amenities.

"So in designing loyalty programs, always think of the benefits that go with it, because it may be the most important selling proposition you can offer," Javier says.

Loyalty program not enough

Expecting the loyalty program alone to build a throng of loyal customers is, again, unrealistic. But then, many retailers still believe otherwise.

This caused many retail firms to expect too much out of their loyalty programs. Or, because of the program's wrong design, are unable to capitalize on the data on hand to improve their business and generate more profit.

Javier says the next step after getting customer data, is to customize products and services to meet customers' needs and wants.

"If your profitable customers shop during peak hours, you can not only allocate a special lane just for them, but also give them an extra hour to shop during peak seasons, such as Christmas," she says.

She cites the experience of giant retailer Tesco, which sends out discount coupons for specific products that they know their customers will love.

The coupons not only induced the customers to buy, it also made them feel a little bit more special.

Worthwhile investment

Designing a loyalty program does require more from a company than initially thought. But Javier says it is an investment worth making because it does contribute to bigger profits.

She cites market studies that prove that a loyalty program with minimum support can make loyal customers out of 3-5 percent of the retailer's customer universe.

But a good loyalty program can attract as much as 20 percent of the customer base, which would be enough to provide a good return on the investment.

One company that meets, and even exceeds, this benchmark is Rustan's through its Frequent Shopper Program.

Rustan's FSP cardholders typically spend more than the average customer, because they are encouraged by benefits such as rebates, discount privileges, and "members only" sales promotions.

Its experience should encourage other retail companies to invest in loyalty programs, which are becoming more important as customers are swamped with choices.

With a good program, profitable customers will be encouraged to stay loyal, through good times and bad.

Books to read, seminars to attend—our wish list

OVER the past 74 editions of MarketingRx, asking us for a recommended reading and seminar list has been one of the most popular requests emailed and texted to us.

Personally, we try to read at least one or two new books a month as part of our own personal growth plan.

We also attend seminars and conferences organized by other organizations here and abroad.

Here's the list of books that the junior MRx has planned for us to review or read in the next 12 months—plus a list of seminars and conferences that we either regularly attend or organize ourselves.

All of these books should be available at Powerbooks or National Bookstore.

January—Read: Cutting Edge Advertising 2nd edition by Jim Aitchinson (Pearson) P969.

If you spend any money on print advertising, read this. It provides you and your creative agency with some benchmarks.

But even if you're not responsible for advertising, this collection of the world's best print ads is also entertaining. (You know that you are among a rare, weird breed of people if you like looking at advertising while the rest of the world is trying to avoid it!)

Aitchinson was a speaker at the last Philippine Ad Congress in 2003. If he's invited back, try to catch him.

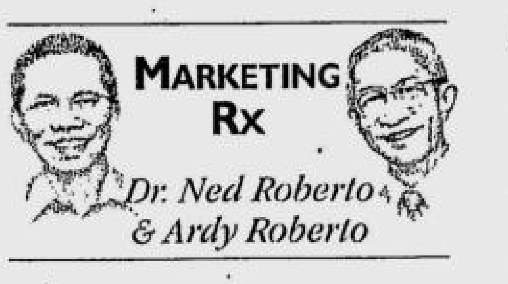
Attend: Challenging the Big Brands, Jan. 25 at the Makati Shangrila. (Tel: 8302191).

Jakarta based marketing guru Hermawan Kartajaya will be in town. He brought the crowd at the last PMA conference up on its feet for a standing ovation.

So it's safe to assume that Kartajaya (a co-author of Philip Kotler and president of the World Marketing Association) delivers his content Hollywood style.

February—Read: Business the Amazon.com Way—10 Secrets of the world's most astonishing web business. (Capston books). P679.

The junior MRx has always admired Jeff Bezos, the founder of Amazon.com. This book should be inspiring to read, especially if you're an entrepreneur.



MARKETING Rx

Dr. Ned Roberto & Ardy Roberto

(Among the ten secrets, includes secret #2: Fill the place up with entrepreneurs and secret #9: constantly reinvent the business.)

If you're an entrepreneur, also read: Entrepreneur's Help Line by Prof. Andy Ferreria of the Asian Institute of Management. (Prentice Hall) P675.

This book has a section on entrepreneurial marketing. Ferreria was the Dean of AIM's Master in Entrepreneurship (ME) program. Try to attend one of AIM's entrepreneurship courses. And if you can, go for the ME program that starts a new batch every February and July. (Tel 8924011)

March—Read: Meaningful Marketing by Doug Hall (Brain Brew books). P1,200+.

Although a little pricey, this book comes with an audio CD that includes a mind-opening marketing IQ quiz that will challenge some of your long-held marketing "truisms" that you thought were infallible.

Hall is a former P&G new product genius who left the corporate world to put up the Eureka! Ranch.

Meaningful Marketing is based on research on over 3,000++ brands.

During the holy week vacation, you might want to read and reflect on "A Marketing Plan for Life" by Robert Michael Fried (Penguin) P705.

This book promised to help you find your purpose as a marketer and "turn your life into the most successful business venture."

Attend: The INQUIRER Executive Seminar series presents Dr Ned Roberto—11 Marketing Prescriptions for Today's Most Common Marketing Problems. March 10/11, Makati Shangrila Hotel.

April—Read: Killing the Sale-10 Fatal Mistakes Salespeople Make & How to Avoid Them by Todd Duncan. About P650.

Duncan also wrote High Trust Selling which we read last year.

If your sales people did not make their first quarter quotas, then let them read this book. These books are very helpful if you have sales people who are in industrial sales or direct sales.

May—Read: Marketing to Women - How to Understand, Reach, and Increase Your Share of the World's Largest Market Segment by Martha Barletta (Dearborn) P1,429.

We're reading this book to learn how to finally make money on women, instead of spending money on them (i.e. our wive's shopping!).

If you're interested in market segmentation, read also Strategic Market Segmentation by Dr. Ned Roberto (Lifecycle Press) P299.

Attend: Check out the line-up of topics and speakers and spend two days at the PMA Annual Conference usually held at the Westin Philippine Plaza.

June—Read: K-Mart's 10 Deadly Sins by Marcia Layton Turner (John Wiley) P1,719. In 2002, this American business icon folded up because of brand mismanagement (deadly sin #1), not knowing its customers (deadly sin #2) and eight other "sins."

We've received e-mails asking us to give case studies of marketing failures. Well, here's a real good one.

Reading about someone else's failures is always good reading because it makes you feel good about yourself. (Ha!)

Seriously, it's always wiser and easier to learn from other people's mistakes instead of yours.

Attend ... well, there's not much being offered in June since it's the start of the rainy season. So you can take a break this month.

To be continued next week...

Keep your questions and comments coming. E-mail us at MarketingRx@pldtDSL.net or text us at 0919-314-5412.

Employees and employers' tax reporting responsibilities

TAX-FILES

By Ruben R. Rubio and Jose Rey R. Manuel
SGV & Co.

(First of two parts)

FOR EMPLOYEES and their bosses, here's a checklist of New Year's tax responsibilities they should not overlook.

Employees' Responsibilities

Update of records

Employees are required to inform their employer before the end of the calendar year if there are changes in their status during the year, i.e. if an employee got married, was declared legally separated, or became a widow or widower; had an additional dependent or if a dependent died; had a qualified dependent child, brother or sister with no mental or physical defect who turned 22 years old on or before December 31; had a qualified dependent child, brother or sister who got married or became gainfully employed.

These changes directly affect the tax liability of employees because their status is considered by the employer in the determination of tax, hence, the importance of updating their records with the Bureau of Internal Revenue (BIR) through their employer.

To reflect the change of status, employees should submit to the employer within 10 days from such change the Certificate of Update of Exemption and Employer and Employee's Information (BIR Form No. 2305) and the required attachments, specifically, documents proving the change in status.

For married employees, they should indicate in the form, who, between the husband and wife, will claim the additional exemption.

If the wife claims the additional exemption, a signed waiver or sworn statement of the husband should be submitted.

It is worth noting that, in the case of legally separated spouses, the additional exemption may be claimed only by the spouse who has custody of the child, provided that both are allowed to claim additional exemption for dependents not exceeding four.

As for employees with multiple employment during the taxable calendar year, all previous employers should be disclosed in the form.

For first time registrant-employees, the Application for Registration (BIR Form No. 1902) and the required attachments/evidence of change are needed and should be submitted to the employer within 10 days from the start of employment.

Taxpayer's Identification Number (TIN)

It is important that at year-end, employees supply their correct TIN to their employer. The TIN will be needed by the employer in the preparation of the list of employees from whom taxes were withheld and the Certificate of Income Payments and Taxes Withheld (BIR Form No. 2316).

Absence of a TIN means inefficient monitoring of transactions by the BIR since the agency is making use of vital information obtained via the TIN system to, among others, trace an employee's taxable transactions, monitor if correct taxes have been paid on taxable transactions, update its database of taxpayers and detect non-filers or stop-filers.

In addition, the government essentially requires, in all registrations and transactions, the transacting public's mandatory use of TIN in government forms or documents, permits, licenses and official papers for which they shall enjoy priority or preferential action in their transactions with government offices.

It includes employees who are required to make, render or file a return, statement or other documents with the BIR.

For new registrants, submission of the Application for Registration (BIR Form No. 1902) to the agency by the employer entitles employees to obtain their TIN.

Multiple employment

Employees who transferred to another employer (successive employment) during the calendar year should furnish their new employer with the Certificate of Update of Exemption and Employer and Employee's Information (BIR Form No. 2305), indicating their previous employment and provide a copy of their Certificate of Income Payments and Taxes Withheld (BIR Form No. 2316) for the taxable year issued by the previous employers.

All income from all employers during the taxable year should be considered in the calculation of tax liability.

Community Tax Certificate (CTC)

Employees who are required by law to file an income tax return are required to pay in the Municipality/City where the residence of an employee is located a community tax not later than the last day of February of each year.

The community tax accrues on the first day of January of each year.

A community tax certificate will be issued to every employee upon payment of the community tax.

If the community tax is not paid within the prescribed deadline, an interest of 24 percent per annum will be imposed from the due date until the tax is actually paid.

The community tax certificate is also required to be shown by employees in some instances like when receiving license, certificate, or permit from any public authority; paying a fee; transacting official business.

For this purpose, the community tax certificate must be the one issued for the current year.

However, for January until April 15 of each year, the certificate issued for the preceding year may be used.

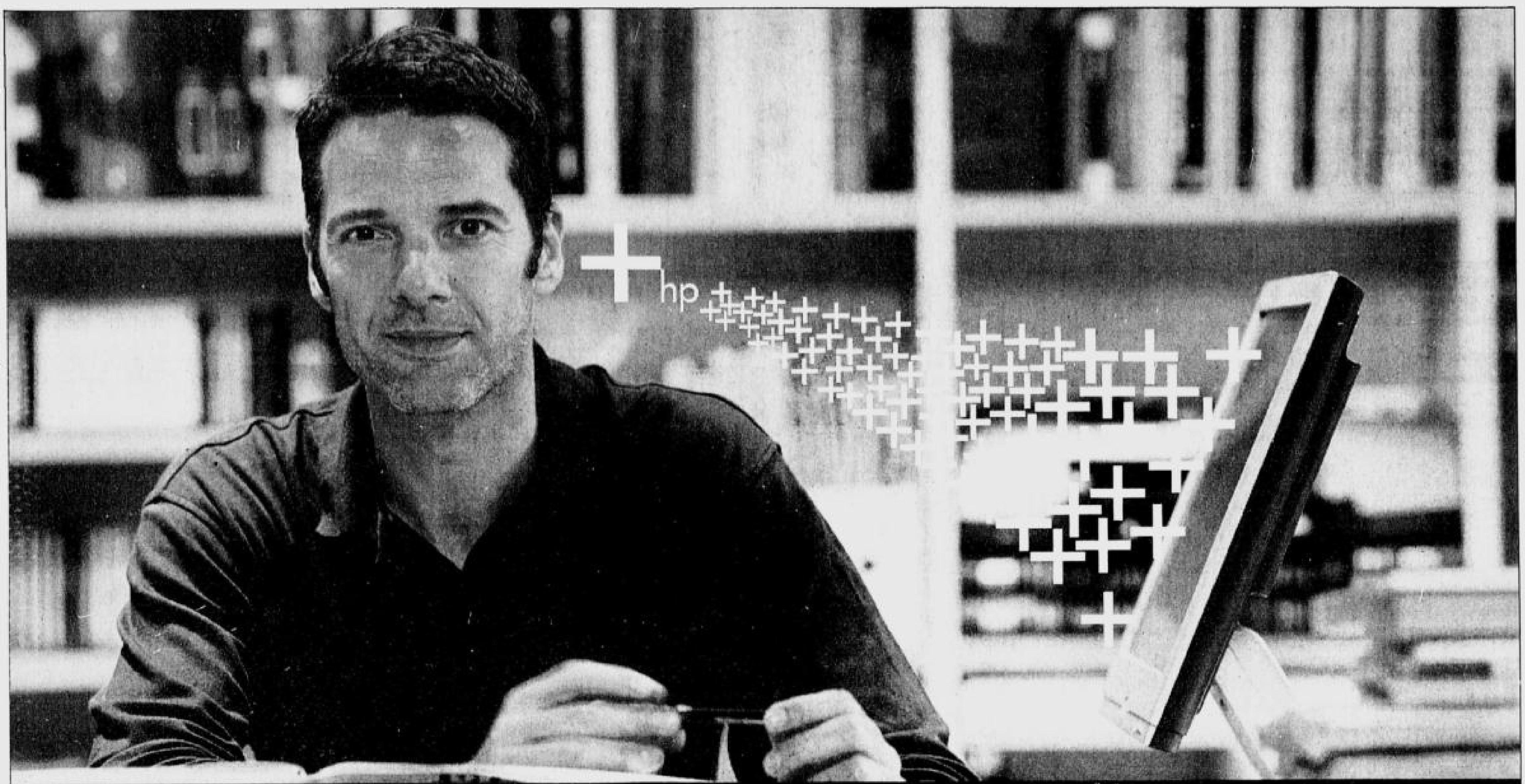
Workers who are abroad for the entire year and who are not required to file a return, may still secure a community tax certificate if they will enter into any of the above transactions or they own a real property with an aggregate assessed value of P1,000 or more.

Annual Income Tax Return (ITR)

It is the obligation of all employees to file their Annual Income Tax Return (BIR Form No. 1700), except if they are treated as non-filers (i.e. gross compensation is equal or less than the total exemptions; an employee whose pure compensation income derived from one employer does not exceed P60,000 and taxes have been correctly withheld) or qualified under the principles of substituted filing of returns. (See related article: No more filing? By: Ruben R. Rubio and Alicia A. Catalla, SGV and Co., Internet Securities/PDI, (01/30/04))

Employees who are required to file their income tax return must submit the return, together with the Certificate of Taxes Withheld (attach all BIR Form No. 2316 in case of multiple employment), on or before the 15th day of April of each year covering income for the preceding taxable year.

No-payment ITRs must be filed with the appropriate Revenue District Office (RDO), whereas with-payment ITRs must be filed with any Authorized Agent Bank (AAB) within the RDO, or if there is no AAB within the RDO, with the Revenue Collecting Officer or duly authorized city or municipal Treasurer.



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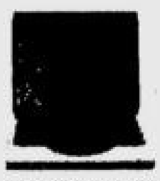

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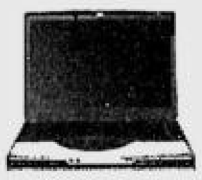

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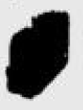

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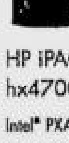

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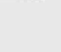

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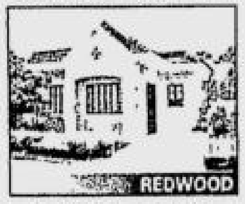

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PUBLIC NOTICES

LEGAL NOTICE

Notice is hereby given that the estate of the late FELIX D, SANDIKO has been extrajudicially settled with an affidavit of self-adjudication by his heir as per Doc #442 Page 90 Book XXIV Series of 2004 before Atty. Alfonso C. Villamil, Jr. of Pangasinan (PDI-Dec.31,2004,Jan.7&14,2005)

Notice is hereby given that the estate of late Hilario Lao-Ing aka Luciano Hilario C. Lao-Ing was extrajudicially settled by the heirs with Special Power of Attorney as per Doc. 219 Page 36 Book 478 Series 2005 before Notary Public Jose L. Ma. Santos of Quezon City.
PDI-Jan. 14, 21 & 28, 2005

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Rudolph Froilan Dimen, 37

External relations officer of PNOC-Exploration Corp. died of cardiac arrest in Makati City late Tuesday afternoon. The president of UST Journalism Society 1989-1990, Dimen had been a brother and a friend to all those who knew him. At PNOC Exploration Corp. where he worked for almost 14 years, he was the company's link to the media and a regular source of information for reporters covering the energy beat. Dimen is survived by his mother Leticia and siblings Geraldine and Julius.

His remains lie in state at the Mount Carmel Church in New Manila, Quezon City. Interment will be announced later.

> *"I am the way, the truth and the life.*
> *No one comes to the Father*
> *except through Me."*
>
> **John 14:6**

DEATH NOTICES

PAOLO ROMANCA

Died in the Grace of our Lord
on Saturday, January 8, 2005.

He is survived by his wife Lovy, children Arman and Lory request friends and relatives to pray for eternal repose of his soul.

His body lies in state at his in-laws residence at Alcantara Romblon.

Interment will be on Saturday, January 15, 2005 at Alcantara Public Cemetery at Alcantara Romblon.

CARLOS A. DE LEON

Joined our Lord on January 11, 2005 at the age of 85.

His remains lie in state at Funeraria Nacional, Araneta Avenue, Quezon City.

Interment will be on Saturday, January 15, 2005 at Mandaluyong Municipal Cemetery at 9:00 a.m.

ESTHER P. HERNANDEZ

Joined our Lord on January 11, 2005 at the age of 92.

Her remains lie in state at La Funeraria Paz, Araneta Avenue, Quezon City.

Interment will be on Sunday, January 16, 2005 after the 8:00 a.m. Mass at North Cemetery.

CECILIA FACUNDO MORALES

peacefully joined her Creator on January 11, 2005

Her loving husband **Clodualdo**; children **Isabel** and **Randy**, **Cristina**, and grandchildren **Raphael** and **Gabriel**; brothers **Jose** and **Gerda**, (†) **Roberto** and **Malou**, **Edgar** and (†) **Cecil**, **Dindo** and **Gela**, relatives and friends request the readers to pray for her eternal happiness in heaven.

Her remains lie in state at the St. Therese of Lisieux Chapel in Magallanes. Interment will be on Saturday, January 15, 2005 at the Heritage Memorial Park after the 9:00 a.m. Mass.

CLASSIFIEDS

National Power Corporation

January 11, 2005

INVITATION TO SUBMIT BID

Lease of Modular Diesel Generating Sets for New Loon Substation, Davao City (40 MW)

The National Power Corporation (NPC) in coordination with the Department of Energy (DOE) of the Republic of the Philippines invites all interested Equipment Lessors to submit bid for the rental/lease of Modular Type Diesel Generating Sets (40 MW aggregate capacity continuous power with a peaking load of 50MW) to be installed at New Loon Substation, Davao City, Philippines. The source of funds for the Lease Contract to be Bid shall come from the Internal Cash Generation (ICG) of NPC.

The works to be completed by the successful bidder shall consist of, but not limited to the delivery, site development, installation, tapping to grid, test and commissioning of 40 MW Gensets (aggregate capacity) including their associated electro-mechanical accessories and fuel storage tanks good for 7 days inventory computed at 24 running hours per day. The generating sets must be commissioned and synchronized to the grid at least forty five (45) calendar days reckoned from NPC's Issuance of Notice of Award.

The complete set of tender documents are available for issuance at the Bids and Contracts Services Department (BCSD), Ground Floor, Building No. 1, National Power Corporation, Agham Road corner Quezon Avenue, Diliman, Quezon City 1104 with Telefax No. (632) 922-1622.

The Bidding requirements and schedule of activities are as follows:

Contract Number – MinP05Z030Se	
Pre-bid Conference	: January 26, 2005, 1:30 PM at Pahiyas Room, Solarium
Submission and Opening of Bids	: February 7, 2005, 10:00 AM at Moriones Room, Solarium
Commissioning Period	: Forty Five (45) calendar days from the issuance of Notice of Award
Cost of Tender Documents	: P20,000.00 (Non-refundable)

Bids of prospective bidders shall be evaluated based on non-discretionary "pass/fail" criteria prescribed in the tender documents.

The Bids and Awards Committee (BAC) of NPC reserves the right to reject any or all bids, cancel the bidding process, declare a failure of bidding or not award the contract at any time prior to award of the contract without thereby incurring any liability to the affected bidder(s) or any obligation to inform the affected bidder(s) of the ground(s) for NPC's action.

(Sgd.) SILVANO C. ZANORIA
SVP, ME & TMS and
Chairman, Bids and Awards Committee

(PDI – January 14, 2005)

PUBLIC NOTICES

LEGAL NOTICE

Notice is hereby given that the estate of the late LEONARDO M. PAULE has been extra-judicially settled by his heirs as per Doc. No. 125; Page No. 26; Book VIII; Series of 2004 before Notary Public Atty. Maria Zarah R. Villanueva.
(PDI-January 7, 14& 21, 2005)

NOTICE OF LOSS

Notice is given that the S2 Card License #14823R04-898 under the name of Dr. Alicia P. Santos was lost. (PDI-Jan. 14, 2005)

Notice is hereby given that the Official Receipt #0001-0050 of - A.T.M. Technology and Industrial Supplies, Inc. were lost. (PDI-Jan. 14, 2005)

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BMHI

BCDA Management and Holdings, Inc.

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY & TO BID

BCDA Management & Holdings, Incorporated (BMHI) invites interested parties to apply for eligibility and to bid for the **supply and delivery** of materials for the Repair and Rehabilitation of PNP/NAPOLCOM Awarded Units in Pamayanang Diego Silang, Ususan, Taguig. The approved budget for the contract is ***PESOS: Three Million Three Hundred Thousand Pesos & 00/100 (Php3,300,000.00)*** chargeable against BMHI.

Interested parties are required to submit a Letter of Intent (LOI) to the Chairperson, BMHI Procurement, Bids and Awards Committee (BMHI-PBAC) at the Small Conference Room, Main Lobby, BCDA Corporate Center, 2/F Bonifacio Technology Center, 31st Street Corner 2nd Avenue, Crescent Park West, Bonifacio Global City, Taguig, Metro Manila, on or before **5:00 PM of January 10 to 17, 2005. The deadline for the submission of LOI** is on **5:00 PM of 17 January 2005.** The LOI should state the Company's name, address and Contact person directly employed by the company. Interested Suppliers must secure the Bid Documents and Terms of Reference for a non-refundable fee of ONE THOUSAND PESOS (Php1,000.00).

For additional information or clarification, please call Atty. Peter Paul Andrew T. Flores at 816-0989 or 816-0990.

(Sgd.) GLORIA GEORGINA DJ. JOTA
BMHI – PBAC Chairperson

(PDI--Jan. 7 & 14, 2005)

PRIVATIZATION AND MANAGEMENT OFFICE

INVITATION TO SUBMIT OFFERS

The asset being offered through Offer from Sale, on an "as-is, where-is" basis, is a parcel of land with an area of 1,454 sq.m., more or less, located at 4812 Sampaguita St., Barangay Sun Valley, Parañaque City, formerly belonging to Delta Motors Corporation.

Indicative Price
P5,816,000.00

Offers will be received, opened and tabulated in the presence of the offerors on January 28, 2005 at 3:00 p.m. at the PMO Conference Room, 6th Floor, 104 Gamboa St., Legaspi Village, Makati City.

Interested parties may request for a duly authenticated copy of the sale documents for anominal fee of P500.00.

For more information, please call Ms. Melinda B. Cortez of the PMO Marketing Department at telephone numbers 892-2145 or 818-4733.

(PDI--Jan. 13, 14 & 15, 2005)

CALL POEA
24-HOUR HOTLINES
722-1144 or 722-1155

DEPARTMENT OF TRADE AND INDUSTRY

Cottage Industry Technology Center

BIDS AND AWARDS COMMITTEE

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The Cottage Industry Technology Center (CITC) is inviting bidders to apply for eligibility & to bid for supply of following hardware and finishing materials.

Lot I	Plywoods and Lumbers		
	5,981 308	Bdft. Pcs	Asst. sizes of KD Lumber Asst. sizes of Ordinary Plywood
Lot II	Paints and Finishing Materials		
Lot III	Hardware and Electrical Materials		

Schedule of Activities

January 17, 2005	Issuance of Eligibility Requirements Instruction to Bidders and other bid documents
January 19, 2005	Deadline for the submission of letter of intent and eligibility requirements
January 21, 2005 (2:00 p.m.)	**Opening of Bids**
VENUE	DTI-Cottage Industry Technology Center #20 Russet St. SSS Vill. Marikina City

Qualified bidders will undergo eligibility check, bid evaluation and post qualification using Pass/Fail criteria. The contract shall be awarded to the bidder with the Lowest Calculated and Responsive Bid.

For any inquiry, please call telephone numbers 942-0880 or 942-3974

This bidding shall be governed by the Implementing Rules and Regulations of Republic Act No. 9184, otherwise known as the "Government Procurement Reform Act."

The CITC reserves the right to reject any or all bids without offering any reason, to waive any formality or technicality, and to award to any bidder whose proposal is deemed most advantageous to the CITC. The CITC neither assumes any obligation for any loss whatsoever that may be incurred by the bidders in the preparation of their respective bids, nor does the CITC guarantee that an award will be made.

(Sgd.) THE CHAIRMAN
BIDS AND AWARDS COMMITTEE

(PDI – January 14, 2005)

PRIVATIZATION AND MANAGEMENT OFFICE

INVITATION TO BID

The Privatization and Management Office (PMO) is offering for public bidding, on an "as-is, where-is" basis, the following asset formerly belonging to Carruf Development Corporation, as follows:

Description	Indicative Price
Land, 1,504 sq.m. located along Maytubig St., Brgy. 710, Zone 78 Malate, Manila	P 24,816,000

Sealed bids will be received on 1 February 2005, at 3:00 p.m. at the PMO Conference Room, 6th floor, Privatization and Management Office, 104 Gamboa St., Legaspi Village, Makati City.

Interested parties are advised to deal directly with the PMO Marketing Department. Authenticated bidding documents, together with the Asset Specific Catalogue, may be secured from PMO for a nominal fee of P500.00.

For inquiries, please contact Ms. Maureen B. Valiente at telephone numbers 817-8762 or 892-2145.

(PDI--Jan. 14, 15 & 16, 2005)

Republic of the Philippines
Department of Health
CENTER FOR HEALTH DEVELOPMENT
Northern Mindanao
Cagayan de Oro City
Tel. No. (088) 856-7123, 2332306, 3504325; 726476

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The Center for Health Development – Northern Mindanao, Carmen, Cagayan de Oro City, is inviting contractors and security services operators to apply for eligibility and to bid for security services for calendar year 2005 with approved Budget Cost of P820,000.00 sourced out of the GOP appropriations for this Office

Timetable of bidding process are as follows:

Bidding Process	Schedule
Registration of interested contractors	Starts January 17, 2005
Pre-Bidding Conference	January 20, 2005 2:00 PM, DOH-CHD Conference Room
Period of contractors eligibility check	January 20 to February 10, 2005
Opening of Bids	February 14, 2005 2:00 PM, DOH-CHD Conference Room

Bid forms will be made available to suppliers/contractors who passed the eligibility check at a non-refundable cost of P50.00.

The Director IV of the DOH-CHD Northern Mindanao, Carmen, Cagayan de Oro City, reserve the right to waive any defect or informality in the offers of bids, and rejects any or all bid proposal that may be deemed disadvantageous to the government.

For further information, please inquire from the Bids and Awards Committee, or its Secretariat, or call telephone no. 858-7123, 233-2306, 350-4325, or visit our website at www.chd10.doh.gov.ph or email us at chd_cdo@yahoo.com

(Sgd.) MARIETTA C. FUENTES, MD, MPH, CESO III
Director IV

(PDI-Jan. 14 & 21, 2005)

Ecozone '04 exports hit $31B

By Ronnel W. Domingo

EXPORTS from the country's economic zones hit $30.9 billion in 2004, up 13.2 percent from $27.3 billion the previous year, according to the Philippine Economic Zone Authority.

Peza data showed that the private or special economic zones (SEZ) accounted for the bulk of the exports, with $23.8 billion worth of products, an increase of 17 percent from $20.4 billion the previous year.

Laguna Technopark Inc. led the way with $7.49 billion, followed by Gateway Business Park, $4.96 billion; Amkor Technology SEZ, $2.15 billion and Carmelray Industrial Park I, $1.06 billion.

Among these four, Gateway Business Park posted the biggest growth at 108 percent from $2.38 billion 2003, while top SEZ exporter Laguna Technopark reported a growth rate of 1 percent.

Amkor posted an increase of 76.6 percent; Lima Technology, 37 percent and Carmelray I, 33.2 percent.

Information technology parks and buildings earned a total of $203.27 million in receipts, an increase of 57.8 percent from $128.84 million.

WORKERS at a semiconductors firm in Laguna. Private ecozones exported $23.8 billion worth of products in 2004. AFP

The top five earners among IT buildings and parks in 2003 were: Eastwood City Cyber Park at $58.75 million; RCBC Plaza Information, earning $55.86 million; Pacific Information Technology, $24.2 million; PBCom Tower, $20.35 million; and E-Square Information Technology, $10.64 million.

On the other hand, export revenues from the four public ecozones inched up by 1.2 percent to $6.91 billion last year from $6.83 billion in 2003.

Baguio City Economic Zone shipped out $2.94 billion worth of products, followed by Cavite Economic Zone, $2.03 billion; Mactan Economic Zone, $1.66 billion and Bataan Economic Zone, $284 million.

Of the public ecozones, Bataan posted a growth rate 6.1 percent from $268.1 million while Cavite's exports grew 3.9 percent, and Mactan, 1.5 percent.

Last month, Peza reported that new investments in the ecozones amounted to P46.14 billion, up by 62.48 percent from P28.4 billion in 2003.

Earlier this week, Trade Secretary Cesar V. Purisima said the country's total exports would exceed the target of between 7 percent and 8 percent for 2004 as vital export industries performed "impressively" in November.

Agri growth to slow down in '05, says UA&P

By Christine A. Gaylican

THE AGRICULTURE sector, which accounts for about a fifth of the country's domestic output, is expected to slow down its growth this year, from 5 percent last year, according to the University of Asia and the Pacific's Center for Food and Agri Business.

According to Rolando Dy, executive director of the UA&P Center, the limited government budget and high cost of farm inputs, such as fertilizer, will limit the sector's growth to 2.5-3.5 percent this year.

Dy added that the anticipated dry spell brought about by the El Nino weather phenomenon will reduce rice production this year.

Corn and sugar production was also expected to go down due to the increasing cost of fertilizers.

Selling prices, meanwhile, have not moved due to excess supply.

"We have assessed that there would be a decline of 10 percent in the country's sugar production as the excess production last year softened farmgate prices," added Dy.

The higher price of fuel may also limit the commercial fishery sector's output this year.

The UA&P said the main growth drivers would be the seaweed, corn and coconut industries.

There is higher demand for these products here and abroad.

Despite these concerns, the UA&P Center still expects the sector to grow significantly, although not at the same pace as last year's.

"The agriculture sector's growth is still better than the average growth rate of 2.6 percent attained in 1994 to 2003, but there would be a slowdown compared to the growth attained in 2004," Dy said in a briefing yesterday.

The Department of Agriculture, on the other hand, expects the sector to grow by 4.2 percent this year.

The performance of the agriculture sector is closely watched as it makes up about 20 percent of the country's Gross Domestic Product.

However, if the direct and indirect effects of agriculture input such as supplies, processing, storage and distribution are included, the sector's impact could reach more than 50 percent, Dy said.

Dy, meanwhile, urged the government to desist from making frequent leadership changes at the DA as it hampers the implementation of key programs.

"We hope the new Secretary of Agriculture would continue the initiatives on commodity road maps and supply chain management, which are private sector driven and market-led," he added.

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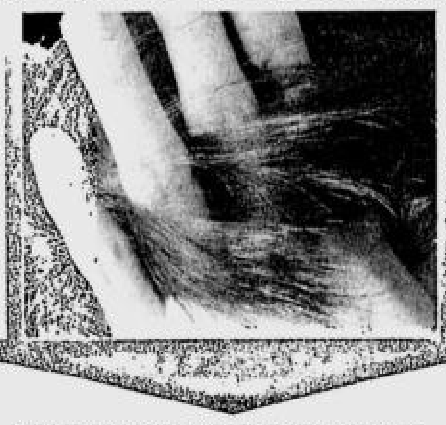

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XC90

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max. output	210 bhp @ 5300 rpm	272 bhp @ 5300 rpm
max. torque	320 nm @ 1500-5000 rpm	380 nm @ 1800-5000 rpm
transmission	5-speed Geartronic All-Wheel Drive	4-speed Geartronic All-Wheel Drive

OWNERSHIP FINANCING PACKAGES

Car Model	Unit Price	Downpayment	Term	Mo. Installment	Interest
XC90	3.945 M	1,972,500 (50%)	24	82,187.50	(0%)

LIFE IS A JOURNEY FULL OF TWISTS AND TURNS. WHAT MAKES IT EXCITING? THE FACT THAT YOU NEVER KNOW WHAT IS IN STORE FOR YOU AT THE NEXT BEND. WHAT MAKES IT CHALLENGING? THE CERTAINTY THAT AT EVERY POINT, THERE IS NEVER AN OPTION OF TURNING BACK.
WHEREVER YOU ARE HEADED, THERE IS ONE THING YOU HAVE TO ENSURE – THAT THE TRIP ITSELF BE WELL WORTH IT. AND FOR THOSE WHO KNOW HOW, THERE IS ONLY ONE WAY TO GO... THAT IS WITH A VOLVO.

A DECADE DECODED

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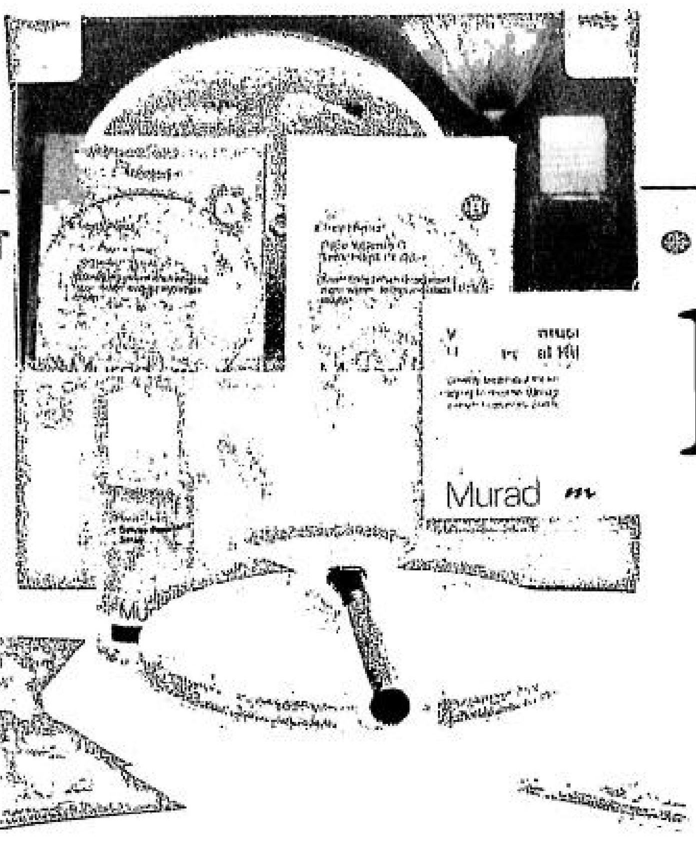
Beyond La Mer

Our resident 'style dowager' picks the cream of the creams for the gradually aging yet always problematic face



MURAD C Infusion home kit or Essential C Daily Renewal cream complex. Murad's Vitamin C Environmental Shield line halts free radicals and environmental damage, much like lemon juice stops the darkening of a peeled apple.

2 Treat I Repair
Day Reform Treatment
Murad.

DR. HOWARD Murad, a UCLA medical center dermatologist, has revolutionized skincare with amazing overnight results in the form of Murad Day Reform Cream.

By Kitty Go
Contributor

COULD there be anything else in the luxury skin-care market that could top the perfection and performance of the iconic Crème de la Mer?

At P10,000 for a 1-oz jar, with a 200-name waiting list before it launched and still with a waiting list years after the launch, it is the reigning bestseller at Rustan's. Particularly for those with dry skin, nothing else comes close.

Since my skin competes with Omega fish oil producers at 30 meters below sea level, the only chance for me to benefit from La Mer is when I take measures to prevent my face from drying to a pulp at 3,000 meters above sea level. With such infrequent use (two weeks out of a year if I'm lucky), the cost per use of La Mer is an expense my husband could only question with, "What??? P10,000??? Is it made of GOLD???"

I thus began my search for alternative skin care for the gradually aging yet always problematic face.

Once in a rare while (perhaps twice a week or even more), don't you get up and look at yourself in the mirror and wonder where is the truck that ran over your face between the bedroom and the bathroom?

On mornings like this, Mara R. Ceguera, brand manager of cosmetics and toiletries at Rustan's, recommends Chanel's Precision Ultra Correction Serum (approximately P6,200). She says Precision Ultra Correction products are for women with sagging skin, deep lines and wrinkles. "Serums are used only when skin needs an extra boost," she notes. For daily use, Anti-Wrinkle Restructuring Cream SPF 10 (approximately P5,700) makes the perfect anti-aging moisturizer with a high sun protection to wear in the city under makeup.

Race to perfection

From Dermalogica, the company that gave the market the ultra-smooth and oil-free Active Moist moisturizer and the best-selling gentle Daily Exfoliant comes Power Rich (approximately P8,450 at Essenses), a skin-strengthening product founder Jane Wurwand wanted developed for her personal use. This seaweed-enriched and pharmaceutical-grade cream is free of acids such as potentially irritating hydroxy acids, which can aggravate sensitive skin. Although Wurward does not recommend this product for young, oily skin, Dermalogica's studies have shown that as early as in our mid- to late-20s, skin begins to lose elasticity and moisture. And by 30, aging officially begins.

Power Rich is a 35-day program to be used day and night. It works in three stages: (1) by restoring strength and stimulating collagen production; (2) by non-acidic exfoliation using algae and yeast; and (3) by reversing sun damage with vitamins A, E, C and B5. With new technology, it may never be too early or too late to improve your skin.

Vitamin C: Beyond the common cold

Skin-care technology has advanced so far that dermatologists believe that topical skin-care products can reduce environmental damage and achieve optimal skin health.

Among them are Dr. Howard Murad, assistant professor of dermatology at UCLA and founder of his eponymous skin-care label, and Hong Kong dermatologist Dr. Henry Chan, who believes that topical skin care is potent therapy and that with sun avoidance,

BEYOND/C4

INSTANT radiance: La Prairie's Crème Cellulaire Radiance instantly provides youthful incandescence with the use of liquid quartz and gold flecks.

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- 1 free beer for the first 100 SIM Switchers (for each night)

Sinulog Event 2005 at FGU Lot
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Hapjaps and Don Henrico's at the Ayala Entertainment Center
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- Jan 5 – 18: Mall Entrance of Elizabeth Mall
- Jan 10 – 25: Atrium A at SM City Cebu

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Enjoy your new Ⓖ Plan with these funky freebies and discounts!

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**Per DTI-NCR Permit no. 0045, Series of 2005. See flyers for details. Promo runs until Feb. 20, 2005.
making great things possible Globe HANDYPHONE

Hot fashion brand in Cebu and Davao

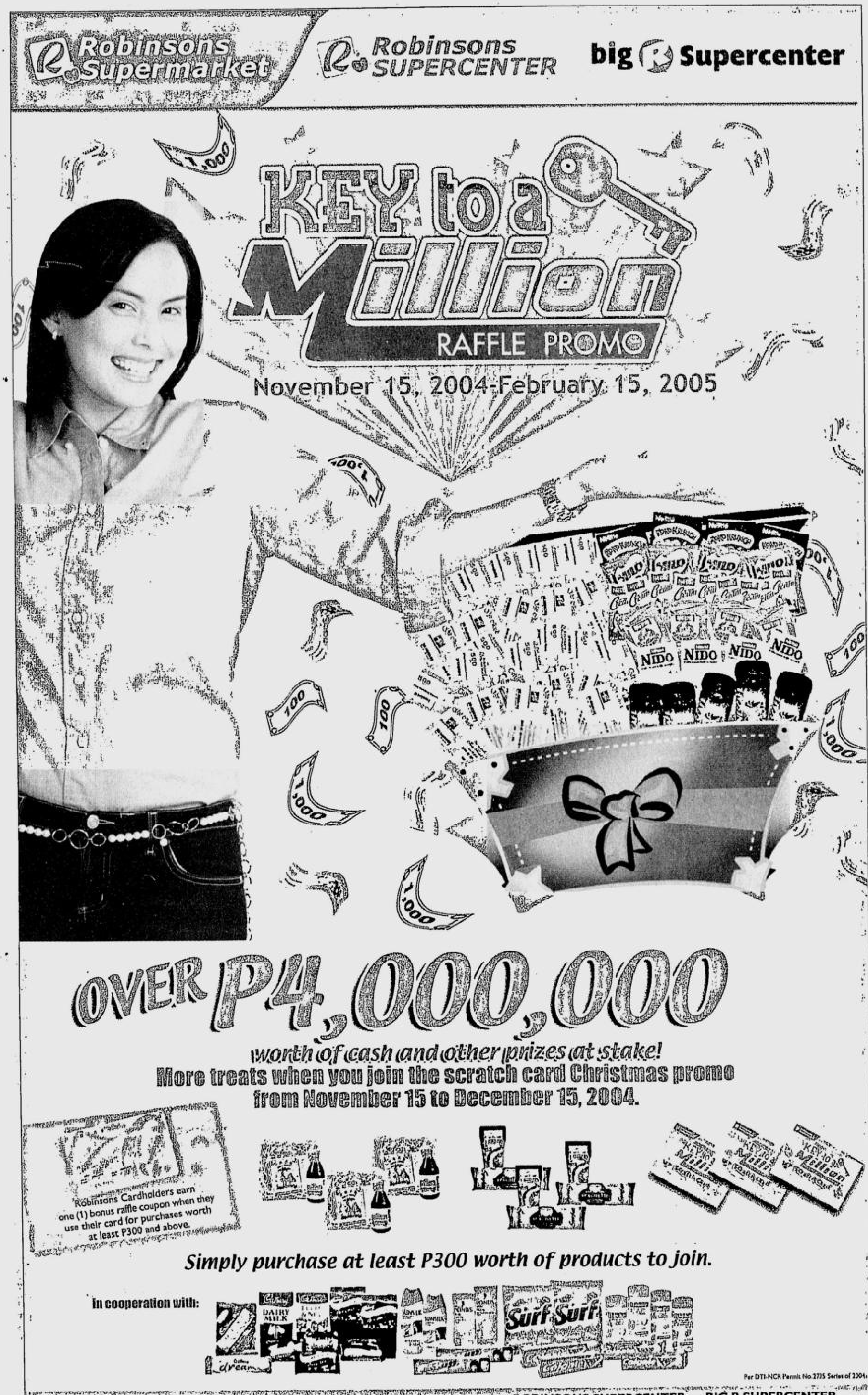
FOLDED & Hung opens its 15th branch at the ground level of Gaisano Mall in Davao City.

FOLDED & Hung opens its 15th and 16th branches at G/L Gaisano Mall Davao and at 2/L Ayala Center Cebu, respectively.

The Gaisano Mall branch is the first franchise-owned store, owned by Edwin Tang who recently signed up a five-year franchise partnership with F&H. The Ayala Center Cebu branch is also a franchise under James So.

In addition to Davao and Cebu, F&H is pursuing expansion opportunities in other provinces in Visayas and Mindanao.

CLAUDINE Malijan, Folded & Hung merchandise manager; Dr. Ronald Pineda, president of Adenip Inc.; Lourdes Lee, Folded & Hung VP for finance; Edwin Tang, franchisee of Folded & Hung, Gaisano Mall Davao; and Allan Vianzon, Folded & Hung director for marketing operations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Simply purchase at least P300 worth of products to join.
In cooperation with:
Per DTI-NCR Permit No.2735 Series of 2004.

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- Target Mall, Sta. Rosa, Laguna
- Circle C Center, Congressional
- Malabon Citisquare
- Nepo Mall, Angeles, Pampanga
- Araneta Square, Caloocan City
- Good Earth Plaza, Avenida
- Susano Complex, Novaliches
- Berkley Square, Tandang Sora
- Eastwood City, Libis

ROBINSONS SUPERCENTER
- Robinsons Place, Pioneer, Mandaluyong

BIG R SUPERCENTER

ALL ROBINSONS MALLS
- Nepo Mall Dagupan
- Limketkai Center, Cagayan De Oro

City-wide sale at Eastwood

EASTWOOD City will hold Eastwood City-Wide Sale today until Jan. 16. Discounts of up 70 percent off are offered on clothes, jewelry, shoes, accessories, gift items, books, toys and hi-tech gadgets. All food outlets also offer special freebies and discounts. Retail outlets at Eastwood City Walk 1 and 2, Style Centrale and Cybermall are open daily, 12 noon-11 p.m.

GOINGS ON

MUSICAL. The Musikito: Ang Batang Musiko Melodion and Recording Group is the featured guest tonight at 6 in Paco Park Presents. Admission is free.

SALE. Freeway, Ensembles, Solo and 22 BC will have a clearance sale on Jan. 14-Feb. 13 at all its branches nationwide.

CONCERT. Concert at the Park presents "Songs from the Heart" on Jan. 16, 5 p.m. The program will feature Lester Demetillo (guitar and voice) and Cynthia Ubaldo (voice). Admission is free.

LAUNCH. Verde Island Resort launches its corporate sales blitz on Jan. 17-19 and 26-27. The sales staff of Makati and Batangas offices will visit different travel agencies, corporations and embassies to promote VIR's corporate rates, travel agency rates, Valentine package, day tour package, diving package and regular packages. Call 7500466/ 7500470.

WORKSHOP. "Tapping the Creative Universe workshops will be held on Jan. 24, 26, 28, 31, and Feb. 2 and 4, 7-9 p.m. The seminars will be held in Rockwell Club, Amorsolo Street, Makati. Call 4265375 or 9290230.

SALE. Sta. Lucia East Grand mall clears the racks to bring prices down to 50 percent off on Jan. 14, 15 and 16. Exchange P500 single purchase receipt for a coupon on the 13th anniversary giveaway raffle promo for a chance to win special prizes during the second grand draw on May 20. Ongoing every Friday night is the elimination round of Mr. & Ms. Sexy Body 2005 at the Brick Road, 7 p.m. Grand finals is on Feb. 19. Call 6815401.

FESTIVAL. Renowned Filipino leaders, artists and achievers will speak and perform at the First National Conference and Festival on Karangalan. With the theme, "Mobilizing excellence for creating a visionary Philippines," Jan. 21-23 at the CCP. Call 6871309/ 6871312/ 6877482.

SALE. Maldita offers 10-80 percent discounts on apparel, shoes and accessories until Jan. 31. Maldita stores are at SM North Edsa, Megamall, SM Manila, SM Sucat, SM Fairview, SM Southmall, SM Dasmariñas, SM Cebu City, SM San Fernando, Robinsons Galleria, Robinsons Place Ermita, Glorietta I in Makati, Festival Mall Alabang, Outlet Yard in QC and Market! Market!, Bonifacio Global City.

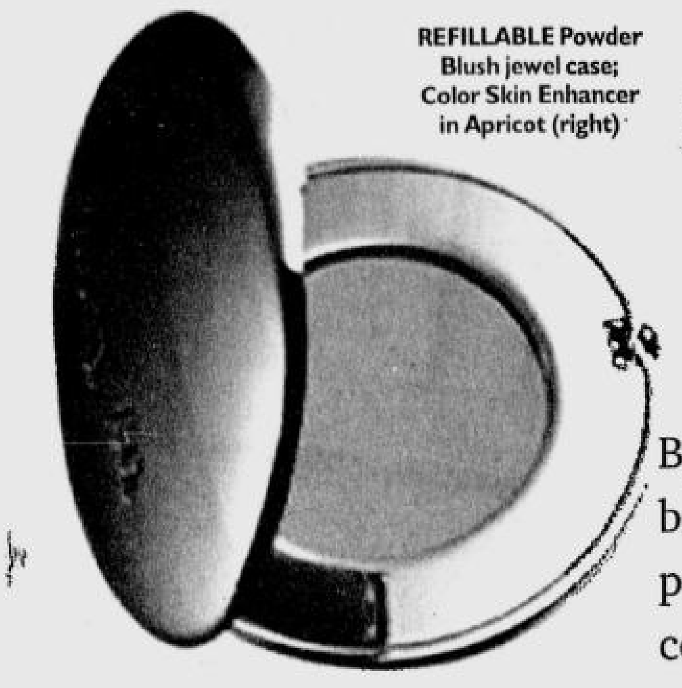
Handyman Do It Best Home Center and Handyman Do It Centers help you deal with the clutter of the holiday season with their "Fix up and Clean Up" promo until Jan. 27!

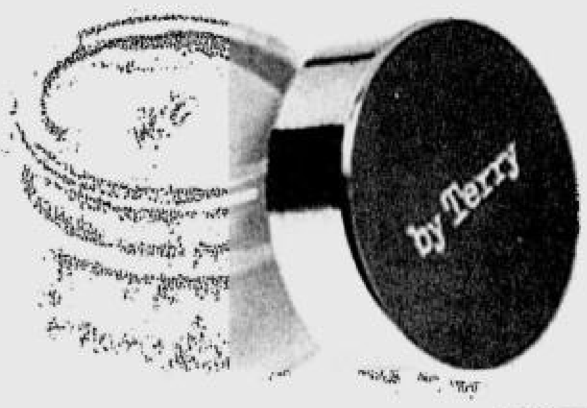
SPECIAL OFFER. Customers can visit any of the 18 Semicon branches nationwide to avail of the zero-percent interest plan when they purchase a Sony Ericsson handset. The zero-percent interest rate will also apply to three-month and six-month deferred payment schemes for their Sony Ericsson handset purchase. This offer from Sony Ericsson is until Jan. 30.

SEMINAR. American cognitive psychologist Dr. Howard Gardner will give a lecture on how to raise smart children to meet the challenges of the 21st century. Dr. Gardner will speak during the First Philippine Multiple Intelligence Convetion at The Manila Hotel on Feb. 11-12. Call 4334948/ 4334949.

BALL. The Johann Strauss Society Inc. and Lifestyle Asia, with the support of Mandarin Oriental Manila restages 2005 Operaball and Presentation of Debutantes, Feb. 26, 7 p.m., at Le Pavilion Metropolitan Park on Roxas Boulevard, for the benefit of the Philippine National Red Cross. Call 7508888.

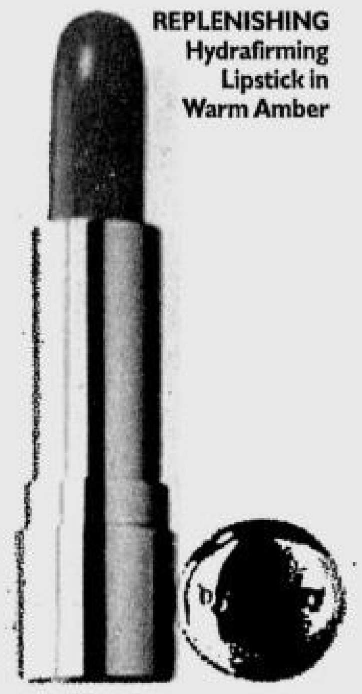
PROMO. Citibank Most Preferred Brands promo is ongoing until Jan. 31. To join, cardholders must text the word "CITI" and the last 10 digits of their credit card and send it to 2366. They will then receive a text message confirming the receipt of their registration. A cardholder may win in the grand raffle on March 3. Visit www.citibank.com.ph





REFILLABLE Powder Blush jewel case; Color Skin Enhancer in Apricot (right)

BLACKSTAR in Black Tulip



REPLENISHING Hydrafirming Lipstick in Warm Amber

By Terry is a new makeup brand that comes in heavy, perfectly smooth metal compacts and cylinders

TERRY de Gunzberg

Make mine mercury

HAVE you ever passed by The Beauty Hub at 6750 Ayala Center? I have been avoiding it for sometime because I knew the products sold inside would be very expensive and I would have sleepless nights lusting for makeup I could not afford.

MAKEOVER 911

Kinny Salas

I attended a makeup workshop there via invitation and promptly got all googly eyed over this new makeup brand called By Terry. Thought I had seen 'em all, but the packaging for the lipstick, powder, blush and powder looks like perfectly solidified mercury. The lipstick is sold separately from eye shadow, blush and powder, so bring a heavy purse along.

By Terry's founder, Terry de Gunzberg, had a father who was a chemist, but she took up medicine. She didn't get to finish a major, though, because by heart she knew she was an artist.

She trained at the Carita House of Aesthetics and was there for 10 years, earning exposure in Vogue's photo shoots where her makeup style did not hide or change the models' faces but enhanced their eyes and lips. She is said to work with the skill of a surgeon and a sculptor.

Gunzberg moved to Yves St. Laurent in 1985, where she acquired more connections and further honed her skills. In 2001, she left the fashion house to put up her own makeup line.

Her fascination with mercury led to the heavy, perfectly smooth metal compacts and cylinders that now characterize her makeup brand. These come with an indigo velvet pouch. As for the quality, she must have taken note of her favorite textures from different brands and further improved them.

These are my top four By Terry products:

The **Color Skin Enhancer** comes in six shades and is the brand's star product. Its light airy texture is non-oily and comes with slight shimmer. The first time I used it, it blended well with my skin even if I was peeling at that time due to a skin treatment. It somehow disguised the peeling and hid the imperfections without any indications of color.

My favorite variants are Midnight Mauve, Tender Yellow and Porcelain, though the bestseller is Apricot. Using this product made my skin look wonderful, especially when topped with By Terry's loose powder.

Blackstar has the texture and look of moist gunpowder in a small glass bottle. Only a little goes a long way, plus it comes in three shades: Black Tulip, Black Emerald and Black Anthracite.

It may be used wet or dry, but is made specifically for the eye area as an eyeliner or for smoky seductive eyes. The right brushes are essential to make application effortless for any amateur.

When applying eyeliner, choose a wide flat tip brush with thin ends in nylon or synthetic. Shiseido brushes are less expensive than By Terry brushes, so for the rest of your makeup, you may get Shiseido.

Starlight Spicy Pearl is very similar to Blackstar, but comes in five pretty colors. The browns are named Blazing Nutmeg and Starry Cumin, while the very wearable pastels are Peppermint Violet, Rose Saffron and Blue Anis.

The pastel-pretty colors may be mixed with eye shadow, lipstick and even nail polish. My favorites are Rose Saffron and Peppermint Violet. Some reportedly apply Blue Anis or Blazing Nutmeg on their cleavage to make it look bigger.

Replenishing Hydrafirming Lipstick: I especially love this, because the metal packaging is already included along with the velvet case.

It has SPF 10, and firms and plumps up the lips, giving it a matte finish without chapping. It just glides on with a rich pigment and stays on evenly for five hours through coffee and meals. Yes, it fills in the cracks, smoothes out the flakes and makes my lips look perfect and full.

It has anti-aging properties, too, and the moment you wipe it off with a tissue, not a trace of stubborn color remains. The catch is that it's priced at P2,500.

My favorite colors are Warm Amber (deep red violet) for dramatic nights, Neutral Beige (for Angelina Jolie Lips) and Sandalwood Beige (a pinkish but natural hue).

The heavy mercury colored compacts cost P5,000 without the product inside. But they're refillable and come with a beautiful metal push pin.

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Forward to 85 84

PROMO PERIOD:
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PRELIMINARY DRAWS:
•February 23, 2005
•April 26, 2005
•June 23, 2005
•August 16, 2005

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See flyers for details
Per DTI-NCR Permit No. 5964, Series of 2004

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Michael Williams • Pinky Amador • Miguel Faustmann
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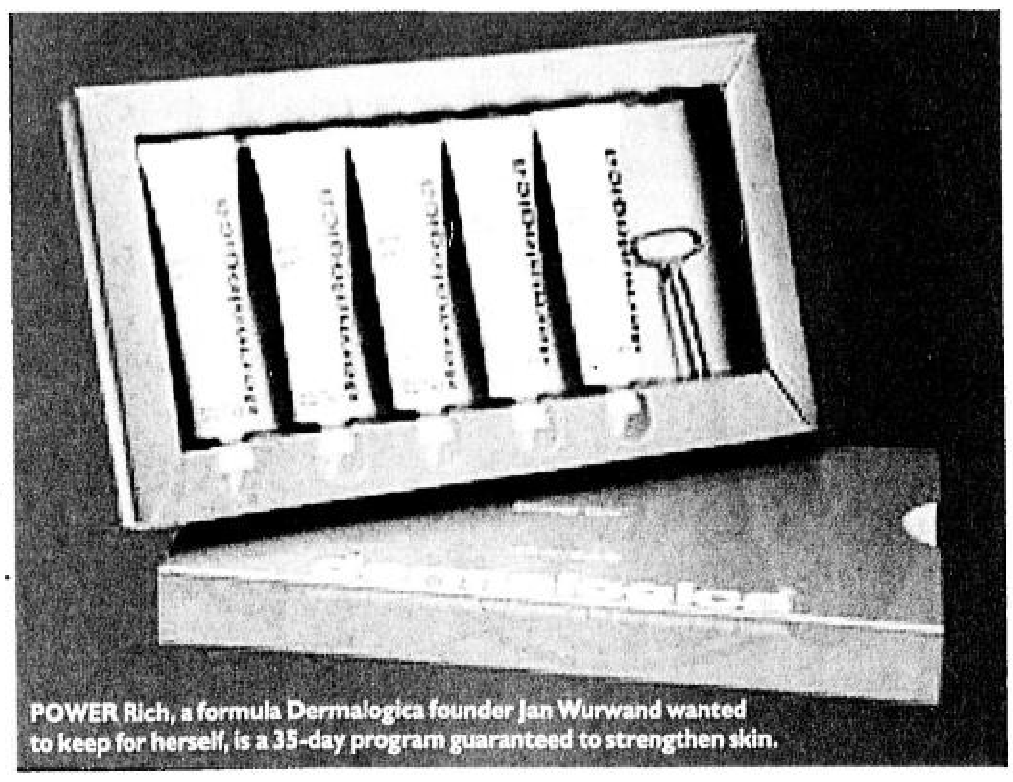


POWER Rich, a formula Dermalogica founder Jan Wurwand wanted to keep for herself, is a 35-day program guaranteed to strengthen skin.

Beyond La Mer

From page C1

lasers and fillers, surgery is now considered "the last option."

Dr. Murad simplifies the explanation of how free radicals act. "The best way to understand free radicals is to look at an apple after it is cut and exposed to the air," he explains in a skincare guide. "It turns brown… Even if a cut apple has already turned brown, applying lemon juice will reverse the free radical damage and turn the apple back to its natural color."

While environmental damage is not completely preventable (like bumping into a neighbor at the supermarket when you are in curlers), it can be repaired (showing up at her house the next day resplendent in YSL). Murad's breakthrough Vitamin C program called Environmental Shield consists of a cleanser, toner and moisturizers, but the signature product must be the Vitamin C Infusion Home Facial Kit (approximately P3,500 at Essenses).

This Home Facial Kit is a four-week mask and serum treatment of 30-percent pure Vitamin C to reverse the signs of aging. Another noteworthy Vitamin C-infused product is Essential-C Daily Renewal Complex (approximately P4,000 at Essenses) to be used during the day under SPF 15 sunscreen. Containing 10-percent Vitamin C, this non-greasy formula is the perfect daily reinforcement of antioxidants to prevent wrinkles, fade pigmentation, stimulate collagen production and prevent sun damage. Studies have shown this patented product to reduce wrinkles by 17-percent in one application and improve the signs of photo-aging by 46 percent in four weeks.

Instant renewal

By far the most revolutionary skin care cream yet is Murad's Day Reform Treatment (approximately P3,450 at Essenses), which lives up to the promise of "return(ing) skin to a younger-looking state in one day!" The best way to experience results is to use the cream overnight. The day cream works just as well at night for oily skins or humid climates.

This is the first product to use tannic acid (found in fruits and vegetables) as an intense anti-aging ingredient. Dr. Murad explains his choice of this ingredient, "Tannic acid causes the cells to bind together, thickening the skin's barrier and therefore keeping the free radicals out and water in."

Aside from tannic acid, the cream contains red tea extract, Omega-3 oil and Tahitian Noni Extract, once touted as a cancer preventative measure, a substance found to be rich in anti-oxidants.

Like gold

La Prairie, the maker of another iconic product Skin Caviar Luxe Cream (approximately P12,000 at Rustan's), has raised the luxury cream bar with Crème Cellulaire Radiance, which claims to instantly bring back the incandescence of youth with gold flecks, liquid and quartz crystals. Indeed, upon application, because of the shimmering formulation, lines are minimized and skin is brightened. This rich face and neck cream has papaya extract for gentle exfoliation and a special complex formulated to address concerns of menopausal skin.

At P25,000, if my husbands asks, "Is it made of gold?" I can confidently say, "Yes! Can't you see it on my face?"

Essenses is at Ayala Center, Makati City (8133739); Alabang Town Center, Muntinlupa City (8505532); Shangri-La Mall, Mandaluyong City (6334636); Robinsons Place Manila (5281440); Gateway, Cubao (9138830); Ayala Center, Cebu (03-23215633).

E-mail the author at kittygo_pdi@yahoo.com.

Natural-looking lash extension

THE TONY Galvez Eyelash Extension is the very first eyelash extension technique in the country that uses high quality and natural looking lashes.

The technique uses strands that are well matched to a person's real lashes for a natural effect. The eyelash extension comes in black, purple and blue to match any makeup or outfit. It is comfortable, durable and will not fall off even when bathing or swimming.

The extension can be attached to the lashes in just half an hour through grafting using non-toxic glue. It is safe and will last for as long as three months. A pair costs P1,500-P2,000.

Meanwhile, enrollment is ongoing at the Tony Galvez School of Cosmetology for diploma and certificate courses, as well as one-on-one tutorials. A 16-module cosmetology state board examination review program based on American and European standards is also being offered. It is especially designed for those who need to take a licensure examination abroad.

The Tony Galvez Salon is at The Tony Galvez Centrum, 124 9th Avenue near corner P. Tuazon Blvd., Araneta Center, Cubao, QC. Call 9134370/9133953 or e-mail tgalvez117@yahoo.com or visit www.tonygalvez.com.ph.

Smooth-as-silk lips

THE NEW Max Factor Silk Gloss gives a lasting high-beam shine while offering the smooth feel of a lip balm.

Silk Gloss has high shine boosters and up to 40 percent special lip conditioning ingredients that moisturize and protect lips. It comes in eight silky shades ranging from peach to caramel, raspberry balm to red.

Graham Johnston, chief makeup artist of movies such as "Love Actually" and the Bridget Jones series, says Max Factor's Silk Gloss has the dazzling shine of a lip gloss with the delicious feel of a lip balm.

Silk Gloss is the latest offering of Max Factor, The Makeup of Makeup Artists, and will be available starting February at a retail price of P495.

Max Factor is exclusively distributed by Rustan Marketing Corp. and is available in leading department stores nationwide.

SILK Gloss

THE RIGHT way to wear your bra /E2

LIFESTYLE

For feedback, e-mail us at lifestyle@inquirer.com.ph

Text us your feedback:
Inquirer life name/city/message to
2207 (Globe) or 283 (Smart)

Style trends other than hair rebond

LIFE-STYLED

Thelma Sioson San Juan

YOU know of any woman who didn't have a hair rebond last year or the year before that, or at least toyed with the idea? Girls "rebonded" their hair to death in '04—thank God not literally, unlike lipo procedures which saw a case or two of tragic deaths. The iron plate is to today's generation of straight-permed women what the "rollers" and "spray net" were to our moms.

So, in '05, should your hair continue to be as straight as everybody else's? You can't subject your hair to rebonding indefinitely. There's only so much treatment your hair can take, whether it's straightening, perming or coloring.

As an official of L'Oreal told me last year, their hair restoration products (e.g. for damaged hair) have never sold better—proof, he noted, of the growing incidence of damaged or overtreated hair.

You can take a break from straight-permed hair. The past seasons, naturally wavy hair has been back, which is what many women's hair is anyway. Have a bob, with soft, non-uniformed-length bangs. Or do soft layering. Anything that looks free, easy and unstructured. Or do a ponytail—the higher the more "in."

For evening, have an "up do," sweep your hair up in a soft French twist and accentuate it with a "diamante" hairpiece.

In short, there's a universe of clean, elegant looks out there—beyond the straight hair.

Other '05 trends

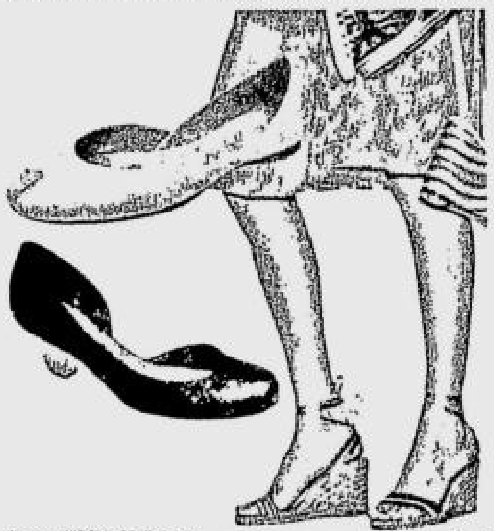
On to other '05 trends to catch. Keep in mind what we've said all this time—fashion is a cycle, or at worse, a pendulum swing from one extreme to the other. It's up to you to choose.

And how do you choose? This is where your sense of style comes in. It's called discernment. That is what separates the woman of style and substance from the mere fashionistas.

Fashionistas wear trends. Fashion victims let the trends wear them (meaning, if I must explain, they have no individuality such that the objects they wear overpower them). Women of style and substance lend their style and substance to trends.

- Flats as in ballerina flats, or round-toed shoes with curvy heels, or more wedgies. Pointy shoes with stratospheric heels can't torture us women forever. Young or old, we're dying to rest our arches and ankles. You can't do stilettos 24/7. If you don't go for flats, there are round-toed (like maryjanes) pumps or sandals with sculptured heels.
- Baggy, mannish pants. Like the stilettos and straight hair, bootleg pants or skin-tight jeans can't reign unchallenged indefinitely. Wide baggy trousers are cropping up, even pleated up front, but still low-rise. Caught at the hips, they actually look sexy, androgynously or boyishly sexy.
- Jewelry is more and more a personal expression. I didn't say it; Anna Wintour did. From brooches to vintage jewelry to heirloom pieces, or even beads, this is the era to wear them—right. Not only on your neck or ears or fingers, but also as clothes accent, especially the brooch.
- Mix and mash. You don't only mix and match anymore; you mix and mash, meaning, you can use materials or elements that seemingly clash. Examples: prints and patterns, matte and shine, bright with bright, and so on. In his latest collection, Helmut Lang didn't only drape; he draped, roped, tied his dress and the result wasn't confusion but an exciting fluid construction.
- Tweed. We haven't seen enough of this, not in Manila at least. Women here are only beginning to discover its mix-and-mash use, with denim, for instance. Levi's creative director, Caroline Calvin, who has more than thousand pairs of stylized jeans in her collection (understandably), said that she's staying away from tweed jacket and denim, now that everybody's wearing it. Right. However, we're not as unique as she.
- Women love pink, after all. For ages, this feminine color was banished in favor of austere black or somber earth tones. But these days women are, once more, not ashamed to wear sweet pink. Prissy? Not anymore. Pink offers a whole universe of hues. There are so many pinks. When I said "old rose," Auggie Cordero corrected me, "Your age is showing. It's not called old rose anymore. It's rose pink."
- Beauty surgery or procedures will continue to find a growing market, from boob to nose jobs. However, I hope women will study this carefully before they undergo it (like see a psychiatrist first?). Surgery is surgery; don't ignore the risk. Did you know that last year, Olivia Goldsmith, the author of "First Wives Club," died during cosmetic surgery in a prestigious Manhattan hospital. (A lawsuit is pending.) Her procedure? Chin tuck.
- Editing. Women must edit their clothes/look before they step out so they don't overdo things. As Oscar de la Renta said, "When in doubt, don't." And as another famous designer added, "Believe what the mirror says," meaning, if you look bad in the mirror, chances are, you really look bad.
- A good book is the best accessory. Read a good book, for a change, to stimulate your mind. If only today's girls read as much as they preen, lifestyle would be a more exciting field to cover for journalists like me.

Where your straight-permed hair will lead you and other '05 trends



WAY to go in '05. Vogue lines up trends: wide-leg trousers, wedgies, round toes.

Sale

On selected items up to 70% off

January 14 to February 27

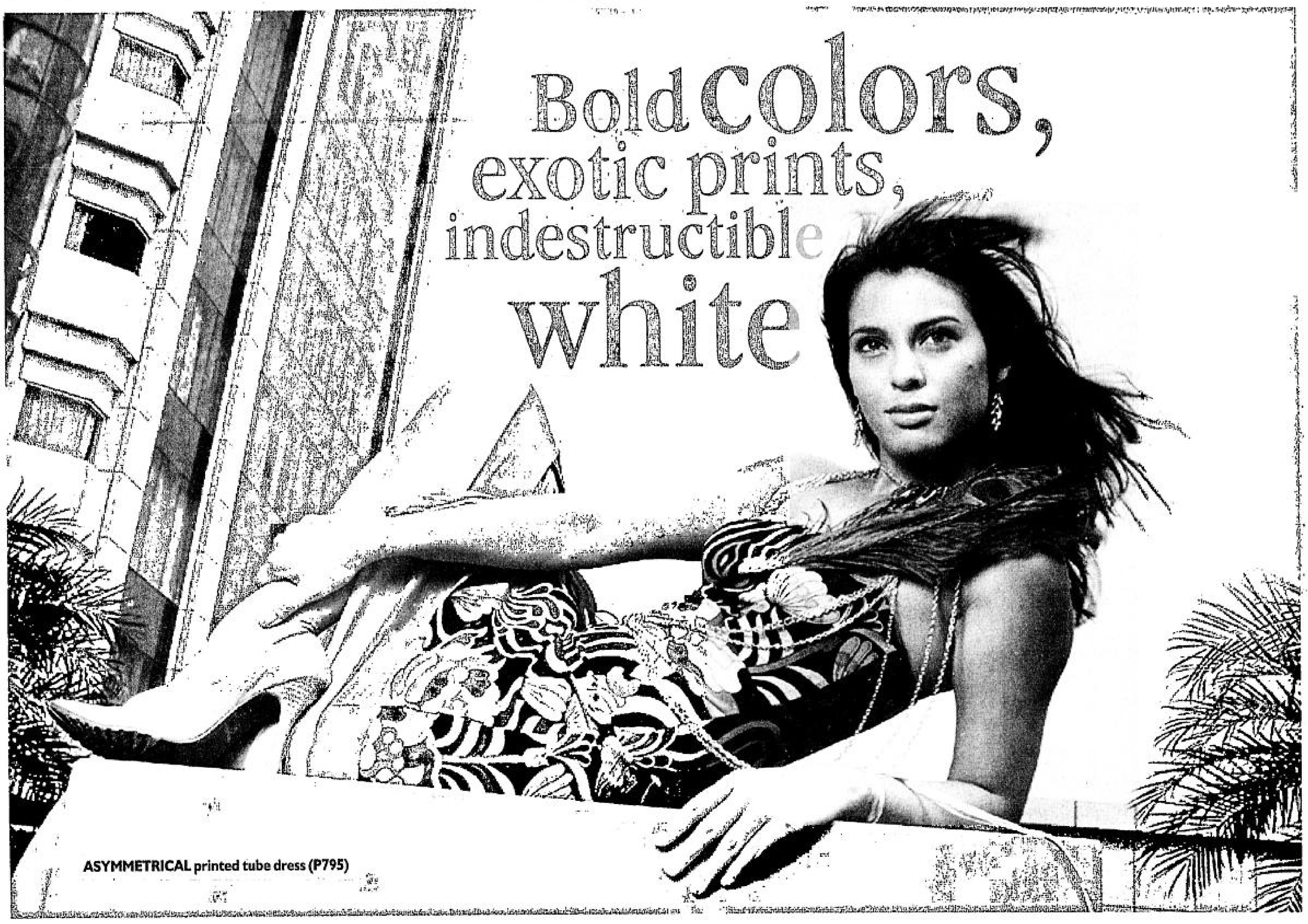
BALLY

Greenbelt 4, PowerPlant Mall, Shangri-la Mall, Rustan's Makati

Additional 5% charge on card purchases.

Per DTI-NCR Permit no. 0036. Series of 2005.

Bold colors, exotic prints, indestructible white



ASYMMETRICAL printed tube dress (P795)

RED SLEEVELESS cotton shirt with Western girl flock print (P595) and denim shorts (P595)

START the year fab. Learn the essentials for 2005—the right colors, fabrics, prints and other must-haves. Time to end the rich colors of the holiday season and jump into the bold, exotic colors of summer. Get ready to turn heads and enjoy the seasons ahead! Freeway helps us forecast what's going to be the big things to crow about in fashion for the first quarter of the Year of the Rooster.

Bright prints

Get ready for lots of eye candies as bold prints in bright colors are expected to dominate. Tip: Think bright and bold. Keep big prints on soft fabrics, or if it's too much for you, pair with solids.

Freeway's collection will include graphic prints, florals, paisley prints and checks in comfortable stretch fabric and cotton that's sure to capture attention, interpreted in many silhouettes, from sexy tops to flowing dresses to cool bottoms.

Whites

Clean whites will be the theme of this year's summer season. Mixing a white top or bottom with interesting accessories and accents will score high points during the hottest days. So get ready to be all white and tidy as you get your tan this year. Tip: White is right anytime. Use it as liberally as black.

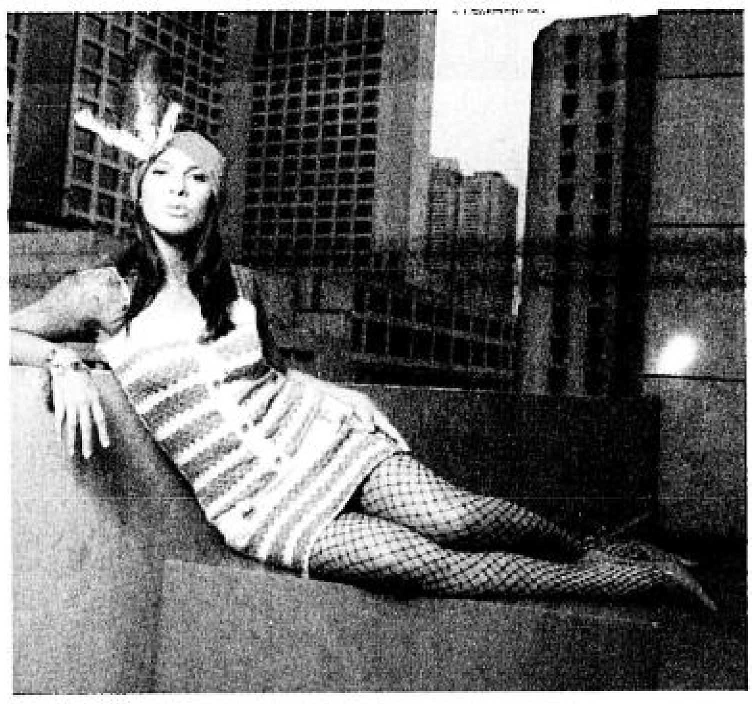
Freeway comes out with a wide collection of white stretch pants and sexy white tops in knits and other soft and sheer materials. Fabrics and cuts are feminine, not severe.

Stripes

Bold stripes in bright colors such as turquoise and hot pink will spell fun, fun, fun! Accent it with flashy accessories—like feathers, necklaces, and brooches—for an all-out striking appeal. Tip: Mix with solids or wear stripes from head to toe!

Freeway is in SM North Edsa; SM Fairview; SM Megamall; SM Southmall; SM Sucat; SM Bicutan; SM Bacoor; SM Dasmariñas; SM Batangas; SM Pampanga; SM Lucena; SM Marilao; SM Iloilo; Robinson's Galleria; Robinson's Place Ermita; Robinson's Metro East Pasig; Robinson's Novaliches; Glorietta 1; Ayala Center-Cebu; Alimall Cubao; Festival Supermall Alabang; Abanao Square-Baguio; Pavillion Mall-Sta. Rosa; Limketkai Mall-Cagayan de Oro; Alabang Town Center; Edsa Central; and Market! Market!, The Fort. Visit www.freeway.net.ph

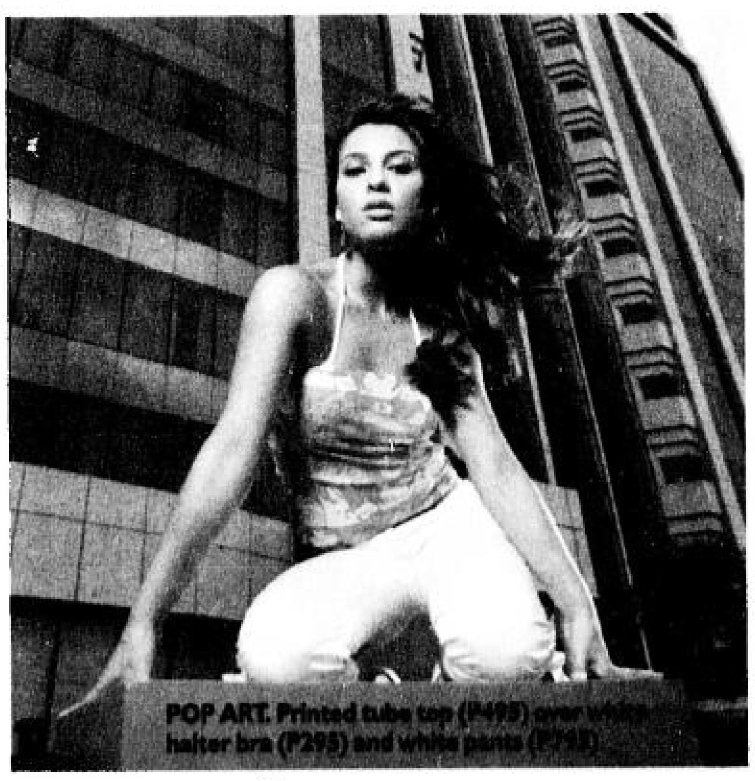
MODEL: G TOENGI
PHOTOS: FRANCIS ABRAHAM
STYLING: MILLET ARZAGA
MAKEUP: JUAN SARTE
VENUE: PAN PACIFIC MANILA, M. ADRIATICO CORNER GENERAL MALVAR ST., MALATE, MANILA



AQUA spaghetti-strap drop-waist dress (P595)

WHITE draped halter knit top (P495) and denim pants (995)

GREEN chain mail halter fringed top (P795) and mint-green pants (P895)

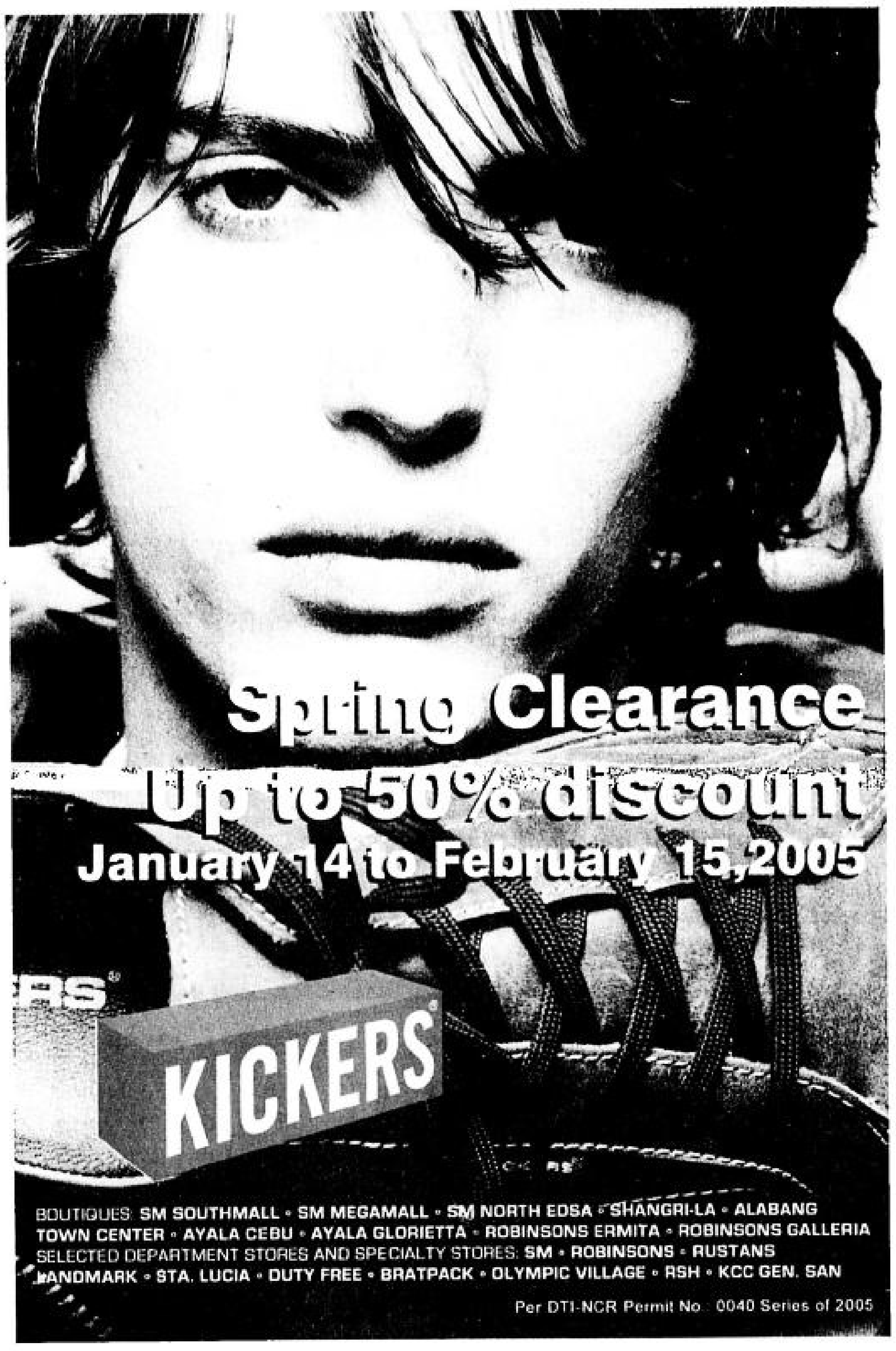


POP ART. Printed tube top (P495) over white halter bra (P295) and white pants ([illegible])

PRINTED shrug (P445) with pink halter top (P525) with mint-green pants (P895)

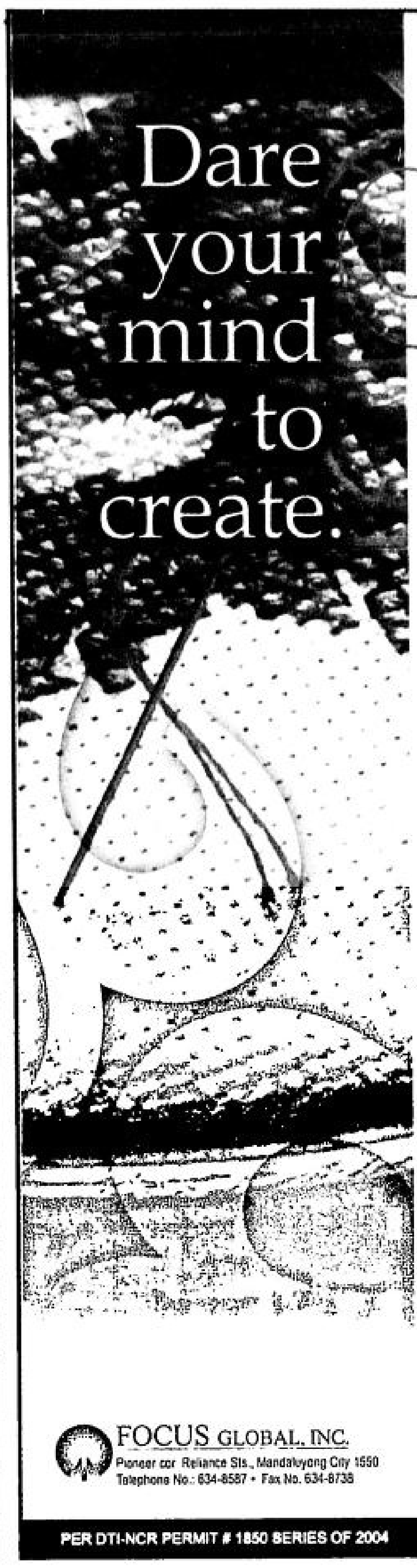
ROMEO 2 NOW IN RP STORES

A sleek and much lighter version of Romeo is now available in all Oakley stores (at P26,695-P28,6950). Romeo 2's distinct open-edge architectural design unlocks one's downward field of vision but makes it 20-percent lighter than the original. It boasts ultra-lightweight titanium alloys, patented XYZ Optics combined with 100-percent UV filtering and world-class impact protection.



BOUTIQUES: SM SOUTHMALL • SM MEGAMALL • SM NORTH EDSA • SHANGRI-LA • ALABANG TOWN CENTER • AYALA CEBU • AYALA GLORIETTA • ROBINSONS ERMITA • ROBINSONS GALLERIA
SELECTED DEPARTMENT STORES AND SPECIALTY STORES: SM • ROBINSONS • RUSTANS LANDMARK • STA. LUCIA • DUTY FREE • BRATPACK • OLYMPIC VILLAGE • RSH • KCC GEN. SAN

Per DTI-NCR Permit No. 0040 Series of 2005



CONGRATULATIONS TO ALL THE WINNERS!

DMC

Masterpiece in cross-stitch

Contest Year3

✶ OPEN CATEGORY

GRAND PRIZE - P 50,000.00
MARIVIC A. ROSAURO - LEGAZPI CITY
Store Partner - P 10,000.00
LEGAZPI ALLIED TRADING

2ND PLACE - P 15,000.00
MARITES SANTOS - MUNTINLUPA
Store Partner - P 5,000.00
STITCHES N' THINGS

3RD PLACE - P 10,000.00
HAROLD B. ANOPOL - LAGUNA

CONSOLATION PRIZE - P 2,000.00
GERARDO F. BENITO - LAGUNA
Store Partner - P 1,000.00
ELISE CRAFT

CONSOLATION PRIZE - P 2,000.00
MARISSA L. DE GUZMAN - CAVITE

CONSOLATION PRIZE - P 2,000.00
AMELIA CARREON - QUEZON CITY
Store Partner - P 1,000.00
DREAMS NEEDLEARTS & CRAFTS

✶ CUTEST BABY DESIGN CATEGORY

MA VICTORIA BAGTINDON, P 2,000 - MUNTINLUPA
Store Partner - P 1,000.00
STITCHES N' THINGS

✶ MOST ORIGINAL DESIGN CATEGORY

IRENE MARIE CARO, P 2,000.00
ANTIPOLO CITY

✶ PEOPLE CATEGORY

GRAND PRIZE - P 50,000.00
MA. AURORA P. CATINDIG - MARIKINA CITY

2ND PLACE - P 15,000.00
MARITES SANTOS - MUNTINLUPA
Store Partner - P 5,000.00
VCM TRADING

3RD PLACE - P 10,000.00
FERLINDA C. PADAYAO - QUEZON CITY

CONSOLATION PRIZE - P 2,000.00
HENRIETTA S. REFE - CALOOCAN CITY

CONSOLATION PRIZE - P 2,000.00
LESLIE M. SARAIN - MAKATI CITY
Store Partner - P 1,000.00
DREAMS NEEDLEARTS & CRAFTS

CONSOLATION PRIZE - P 2,000.00
MA. RITA L. REMO - MANDALUYONG CITY
Store Partner - P 1,000.00
K-MARK

✶ BEST LINEN-BASED DESIGN CATEGORY

CRISTETA C. MIDEL, P 2,000.00 - QUEZON CITY
Store Partner - P 1,000.00
MANILA LACE

✶ CHRISTMAS DESIGN CATEGORY

AMELIA B. VARGAS, P 5,000.00
RIZAL

✶ STORE LEVEL - OPEN CATEGORY

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MA. DIGNA O. BOMBAES - MARIKINA CITY
HAYDEE O. MORENO - RIZAL
GERARDO F. BENITO - LAGUNA
EARLIE MEJES FORMELOZA - CALOOCAN CITY
CAROL M. SULIT - TAGUIG CITY
MARISSA L. DE GUZMAN - CAVITE
HANNAH A. MAYANG - PASAY CITY
PACITA A. ORTEGA - OCCIDENTAL MINDORO
SUSAN B. CLARITO - ILOILO

ALICE C. ERENO - ILOCOS SUR
HAZEL LYNN I. BRITOS - DAVAO CITY
EMILIA R. CASTILLO - TAGUIG CITY
CHARLITA E. SHARMA - BULACAN
GINA G. GAOAT - ILOCOS SUR
ERLINDA R. KIAMKO - CAVITE
LORENA T. PERICO - CAVITE
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MARITES SANTOS - LAS PIÑAS CITY
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PER DTI-NCR PERMIT # 1850 SERIES OF 2004

Judging was conducted last December 14, 2004 at the Focus Global Inc. display room

POWER PLANT MALL
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UP TO 70% OFF*

Amaury • Anne Klein • Aura Athletica • Babo @ HIP • Baby Guess • Bass • Bayo • Bench • Blush Hour • British India • Burgoo • Chicco • cK Calvin Klein • cK Underwear Classic Charmz • CMG • Cole Haan • Croco Kids • Designer Blooms • DKNY • Dockers • Don't Miss @ HIP • Eyexhield • FCUK • Fino • Florsheim • Gingersnaps Giordano • Girl Shoppe @ HIP • Guess • Health & Beyond • Home & Beyond • Human • J.F. Lazartigue • Jessica • Kamiseta • Kenneth Cole • La Compagnie de Petits La Pagayo • Levi's • Lhasa @ HIP • Lila Almario • Limited @ HIP • Lush • MakeRoom • Mango • Marithé Francois Girbaud • Mico • Naturalizer • Nine West Nothing But Water • Officine • Philippe Charriol • Play & Display • Powershades • Preview @ HIP • Proline • Sabater Pascual Optical • Salvatore Ferragamo Shoe Salon Co. • Solea • T Bags and Shoes • The Bead Shop • Topshop • Traffic • Trü • True Value • Tyler • Vero Cuoio • Women'Secret • Zwilling J.A. Henckels

* On selected items only. Full discount applies to cash only.

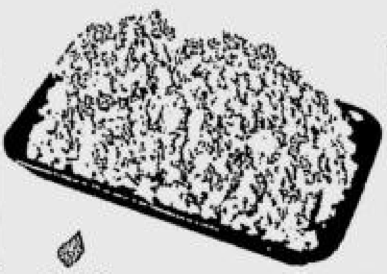
Per DTI-NCR Permit No. A1-009. Series of 2005.

Robinsons Supermarket **Robinsons SUPERCENTER** **big R Supercenter**

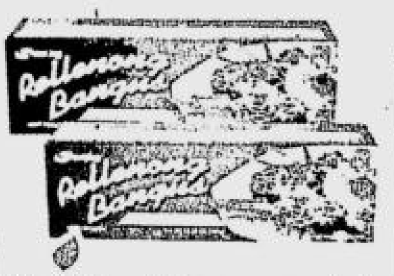
WOW! Low, low prices New Year Sale!

January 14-27, 2005

P149.50/kg **MONTEREY** Adobo Cut


P149.50/kg **MONTEREY** Shanghai Mix

P83.00/kg **SUPERSAVERS** Frozen Chicken 1kg

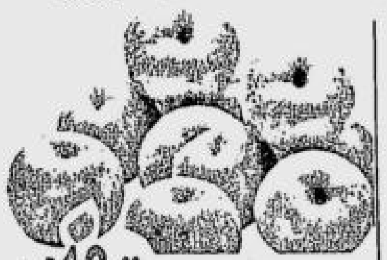

P66.50/pack **SEAKING** Rellenong Bangus 300g

P99.00/kg **ALUMAHAN** (not available in Tutuban & Malabon)

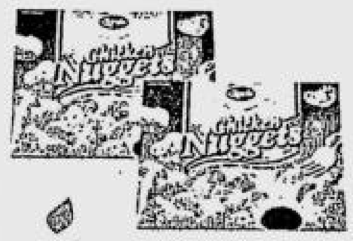
P99.00/kg **GALUNGGONG** (not available in Tutuban & Malabon)

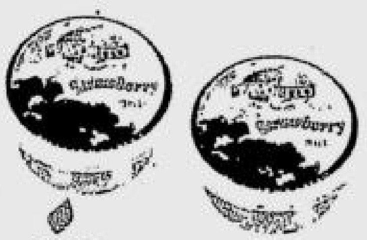
P34.00/kg **NATIVE GINGER** (not available in Tutuban)

P70.00/kg **BELL PEPPER (RED)** (not available in Tutuban)


P13.00/piece **FUJI APPLE** (not available in Tutuban)

P139.75/pack **MAGNOLIA** Chicken Hotdog 1kg


P59.75/pack **MAGNOLIA** Chicken Nuggets 250g


P149.00 each **EL FAVORITO** Strawberry 1/2gal

WOW! Fresh for less

FRESH PICK

OF THE WEEK

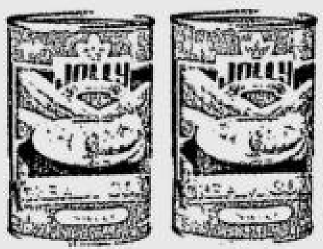
PETCHAY WOMBOK P45.00/kg

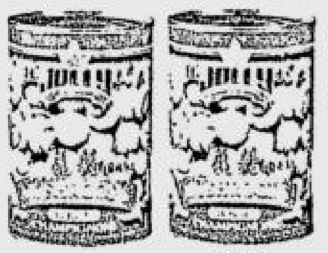
MOONDISH Laing (Extra Hot) 155g P17.75 each

MOONDISH Camansi (Traditional) 155g P17.75 each

ARGENTINA Spicy Sisig 150g P23.00 each

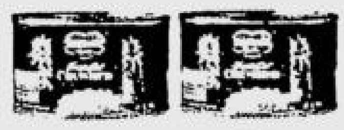
ARGENTINA Corned Beef (Extra Long Shreds) 190g P23.75 each

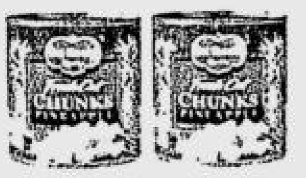

JOLLY Cream Corn 420g P21.00 each


JOLLY Mushroom Whole 400g P23.50 each

PRINGLES Cheezums 184g/Original 195g / Sour Cream & Onion 190g P66.50 each

DEL MONTE Tomato Sauce (Sup) 115g P10.50 each


DEL MONTE Pineapple Crushed 234g P15.25 each

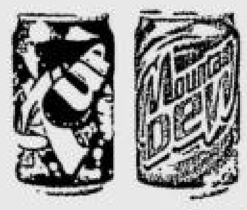

DEL MONTE Pineapple Chunks 439g P27.00 each

DEL MONTE Fiesta Fruit Cocktail 850g P47.50 each

DOLE Tropical Fruit Cocktail 836g P43.50 each

DEL MONTE Pasta Spaghetti 400g P28.45

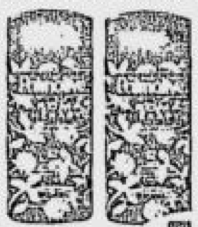
DIET PEPSI In Can 330ml P11.50 each


7-UP/ MOUNTAIN DEW In Can 330ml P11.75

PEPSI Energy Cola 500ml P16.50

SILVER SWAN Sukang Puti/Cane Vinegar 1lit P21.30

SILVER SWAN Soy Sauce 1lit P24.00


PALMOLIVE Aroma Therapy Shampoo (Sensual) 200ml P71.00 each

PALMOLIVE Aroma Therapy Shampoo (Anti-stress) 200ml P71.00 each

COLGATE Triple Action 150ml P61.50 each

COLGATE Great Fresh Flavor 150ml P61.50

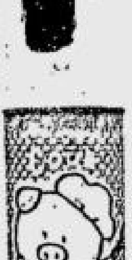
MAMY POKO Skip's (L) 20's (XL) 18's P194.00

MAMY POKO Skip's (L) 42's (XL) 38's P364.75

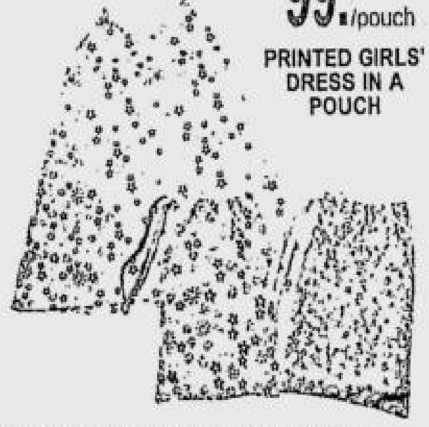
big R Supercenter EXCLUSIVES

25% OFF

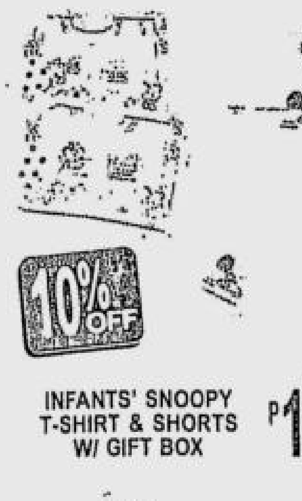
P59.75/bag CHILDREN'S SLIPPERS IN A BAG


LADIES' SLIPPERS IN A BAG P69.75/bag

LADIES' VALUE PACK (SHORTS SET) P129.75/pack


P99.75/pouch PRINTED GIRLS' DRESS IN A POUCH

*not available in Lipa, Dagupan & Cagayan de Oro


10% OFF

INFANTS' SNOOPY T-SHIRT & SHORTS W/ GIFT BOX P109.75/box

ASSORTED MEN'S JOGGING PANTS P159.75 - P169.75 each

P49.75 COIN BANK

*not available in Novaliches, Cainta & Lipa

BUY 1 TAKE 1

12-PC. TUBULAR HANGER Before: P49.75 P39.75

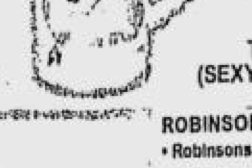
*not available in Dagupan

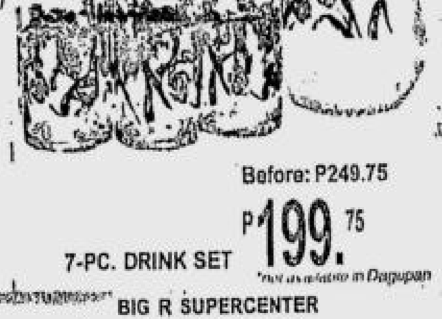
P69.75 TALL MUG (FAT BOY DESIGN)

P109.75 BEAR IN A MUG

*not available in Cainta & Cagayan de Oro

P69.75 TALL MUG (COMICAL DESIGN)


P69.75 TALL MUG (SEXY GIRL DESIGN)


7-PC. DRINK SET Before: P249.75 P199.75

*not available in Dagupan

ROBINSONS SUPERMARKET
ALL ROBINSONS MALLS
- Tutuban Center
- Metropolis Star Alabang
- Target Mall, Sta. Rosa, Laguna
- Circle C Center, Congressional
- Malabon Citisquare
- Nepo Mall, Angeles, Pampanga
- Robinsons Angeles, Pampanga
- Araneta Square, Caloocan City
- Eastwood City, Libis
- Good Earth Plaza, Avenida
- Susano Complex, Novaliches
- Berkley Square, Tandang Sora

ROBINSONS SUPERCENTER
- Robinsons Place Pioneer, Mandaluyong

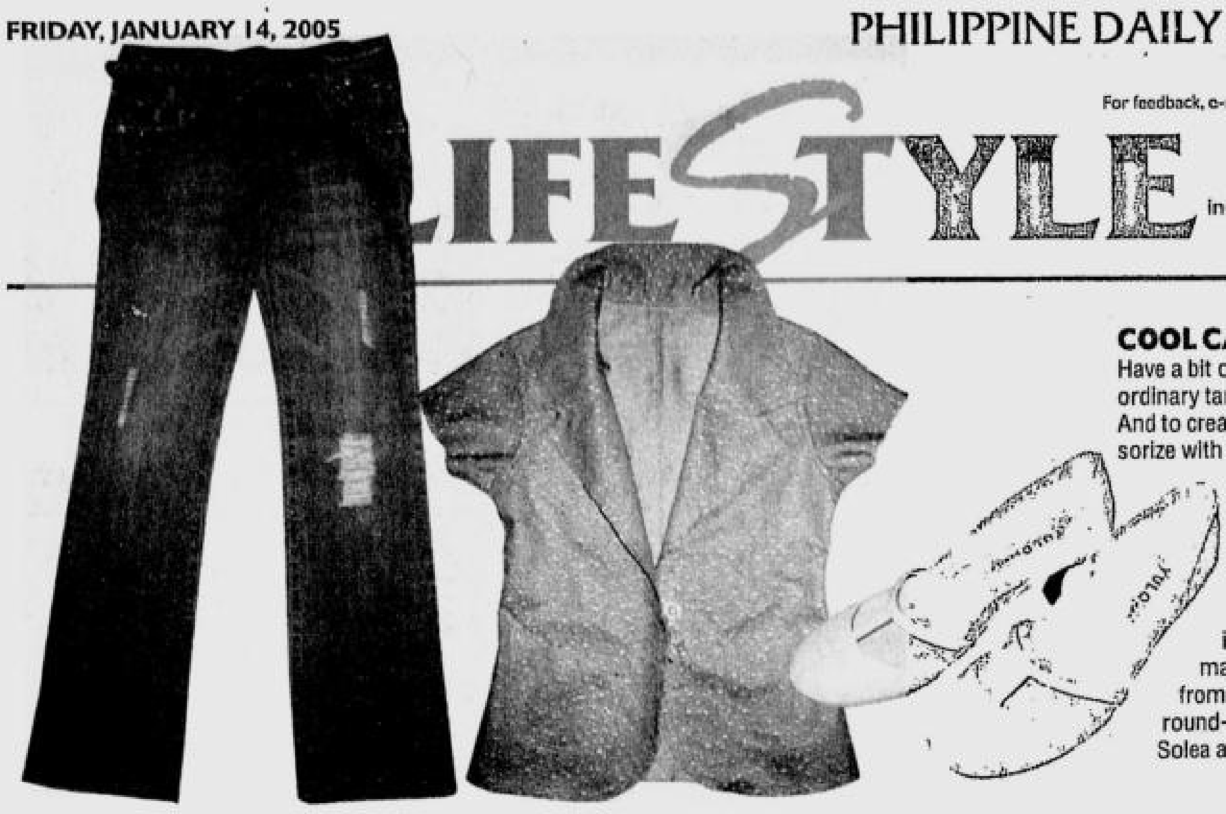
BIG R SUPERCENTER
ALL ROBINSONS MALLS
- Nepo Mall Dagupan

PER DTI - NCR PERMIT # 0101 SERIES OF 2005

For feedback, e-mail us at lifestyle@inquirer.com.ph

LIFESTYLE

Text us your feedback:
inquirer life name/city/message to
2207 (Globe) or 283 (Smart)



COOL CASUAL
Have a bit of fun by matching your ordinary tank with tattered jeans. And to create a funky feel, accessorize with something out of the ordinary such as an animal print belt.

Distressed jacket (P995), animal print belt with chains (P995), both from Mimi Cosmetics at the PowerPlant mall; tattered vintage jeans from *ukay-ukay*, Yulo Manila round-toe heels (P2,700), from Solea at the Power Plant Mall

Jergens
TEXT to Millions!

The smoothest way
to a million pesos
is at your fingertips.

Get a chance to win free cellphone loads and P1 Million!
First time texters must register as follows:
BNT REG <City or Town>/<Province>/<Name>/<Complete Address>/<Sex>/<Age>/<Code>
Send to 399 for Smart & Talk 'N Text subscribers or 2350 for Globe and Touch Mobile subscribers.
See posters for details. Per DTI-NCR Permit No. 2105 Series of 2004

On top with the tank top

You can dress up (or down) with the ubiquitous white tank top

THE WHITE tank top is a mainstay for the spring/summer 2005 collections. Not that it was ever out of fashion, as it's a classic that's a definite closet staple. But this time around it's worn in every imaginable way—with casual jeans, flirty full skirts to formal tuxedo pants.

APPLES' PICKINGS

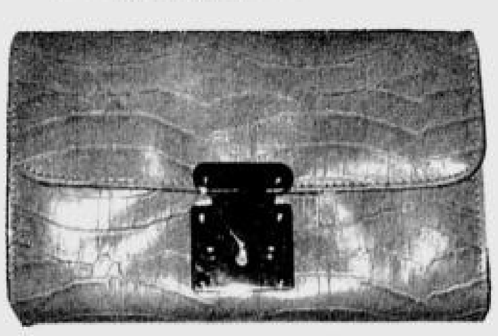
Apples Aberin-Sadhwani

If you don't own one, start searching for your perfect tank from local stores like Bench, Bayo, Penshoppe and Kashieca or boutiques such as Mango, Topshop, Calvin Klein and the like.

There are no definite guidelines when choosing your top. Just make sure it fits well, does not hug too tightly and feels good against the skin. It's not that easy to find a good tank top so when you find one of excellent quality and fit that suits your budget, purchase a couple so you'll always have a spare.

Here are some of my suggestions on how you can maximize the use of your flexible and practical white tank.

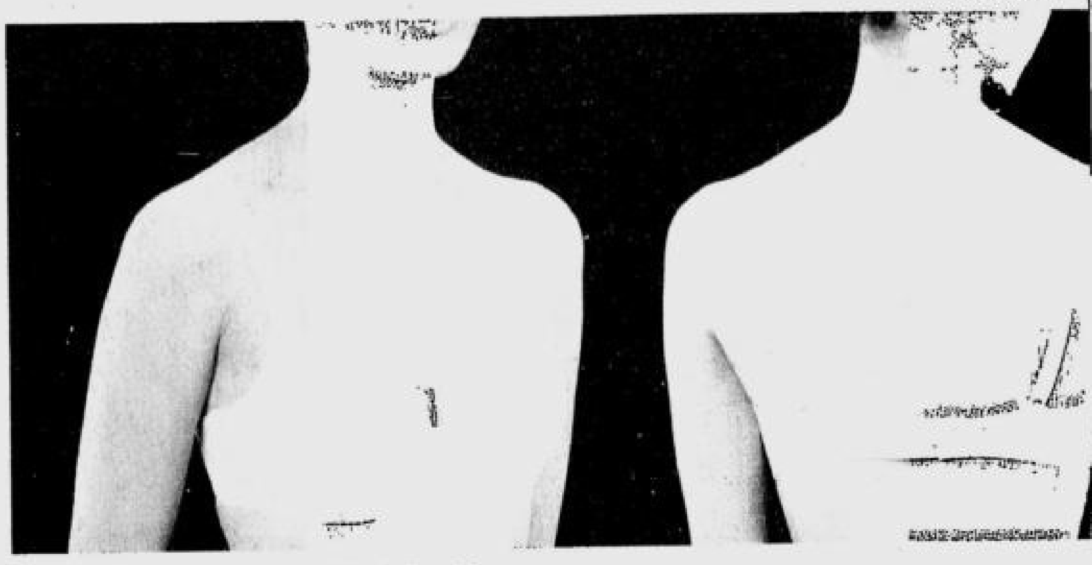
E-mail the author at apsadvice@hotmail.com



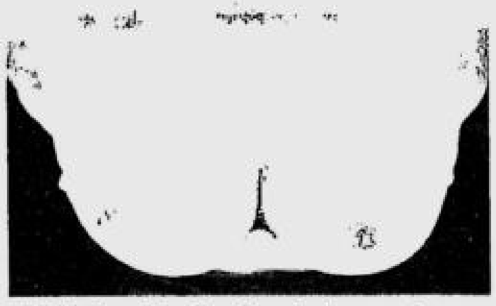
MODERN MIX
Veer away from your usual office attire by donning up-to-the minute culottes, your simple tank and a streamlined denim jacket. You'll surely look sleek, chic and in control.

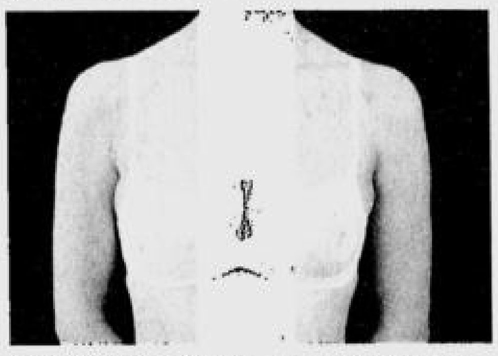
Raw denim jacket (P2,350), pinstriped culottes (P1,750), rectangular pistachio clutch, (P2,450), all from Tyler

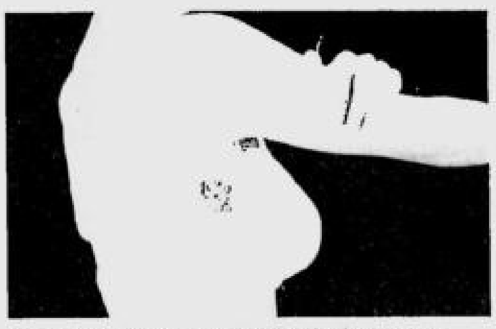
2005
SPECIAL OFFERS
14 16
Store
Park • Magallar
BUY 1 TAKE 1
Price-offs
Sale Price
109.63
49.41
26.10
24.26
Get Free Pandan/Ube Mamon
Free Mamon


A PERFECTLY fitted bra should look like this.

FOR ATHLETIC activities, wear a properly reinforced sports bra.


THIS is how it looks when the bra cup is too small for the bust size.


IF YOUR flesh spills from your bra cup near the armpits, the cup size is too small.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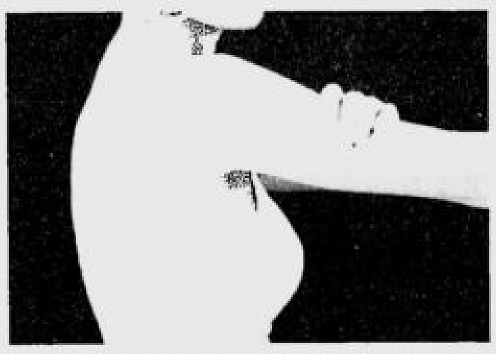
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Don't brush aside the bra

Wacoal's Perfect Fit campaign seeks to teach women how to choose the right undergarments

By Cheche V. Moral

WOMEN generally tend to focus too much on clothes and neglect undergarments. Granting they do spend time perusing the brassieres racks, most put more thought on the styles and colors, like we do with our outerwear, than the fit of bras.

This is a common mistake women tend to make, said Abbygale Arenas-de Leon. The beauty queen and image consultant, in her lecture for Wacoal's 2005 Perfect Fit campaign, said even she hadn't been exempt from this.

After giving birth to her son and regaining her pre-pregnancy figure, Arenas-de Leon resumed wearing the same bra size. Unknown to many, she said, a woman's figure and bra size change after childbirth, even after losing all the pregnancy weight. She recalled wearing a cup size that was too big soon after delivering her child.

For a long time, she said, she wore the same style of bra underneath her clothes. "I didn't give much thought to what styles would suit different types of clothes." Whether off to the gym or to a romantic dinner, she said, your bra could make or break your outfit. More important, wearing the wrong bra size can eventually lead to bad posture, breathing difficulties and feelings of discomfort.

Recognizing that many Filipinas may not be fully aware of the consequences of wearing the wrong bra size and wrong bra style for the variety of their activities, female undergarments maker Wacoal has launched an educational campaign this year in lieu of its annual trend fashion show.

"Everybody's doing [underwear] fashion shows," said Elmira Cadungog, merchandising manager of Philippine Wacoal Corp. "We want to be relevant to our clients so we're holding a series of awareness activities instead."

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"Don't buy if you're in a hurry," advised Arenas-de Leon in her lecture at the Makati Shangri-La. Bra size varies with different styles so don't just pick the usual size and proceed to the checkout counter. "Try at least two sizes. Don't buy in a store where they refuse to let you try on the merchandise."

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As you age your bra size changes because, like it or not, your body succumbs to gravity. Weight gain—or loss—and other factors like pregnancy must also be considered.

Different bra styles suit different dress styles and fabrics, according to the image consultant. Not too long ago, the so-called T-shirt bras became very popular for those body-skimming outfits that required a smooth, seamless look. The line is now one of Wacoal's most saleable.

Lacey styles, textured materials or pointy styles with darts should only be worn underneath heavy fabrics like sweaters and suits. The darts will ensure that your bra isn't "crushed" under the fabric and therefore still give you shape. The fabric's texture, meanwhile, won't show through your dress.

Built-in corset

For outfits requiring support in the midsection, women can opt for the body bra, or a bra with a built-in corset. Bandeaus, on the other hand, are worn underneath peek-a-boo tops, or may be worn as tops themselves. There are specific styles intended for athletic women (usually with little or no padding, and no underwire) and for pregnant and lactating women.

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You should be able to slip one finger between your bra cups, no more, no less, said Arenas-de Leon. This is a blunder committed by women who want maximum cleavage, albeit the wrong way: They tend to pick a bra that's a cup (or two) too small. A woman should be able to enhance her curves by knowing the right steps to wearing her bras. *(See sidebar below.)*

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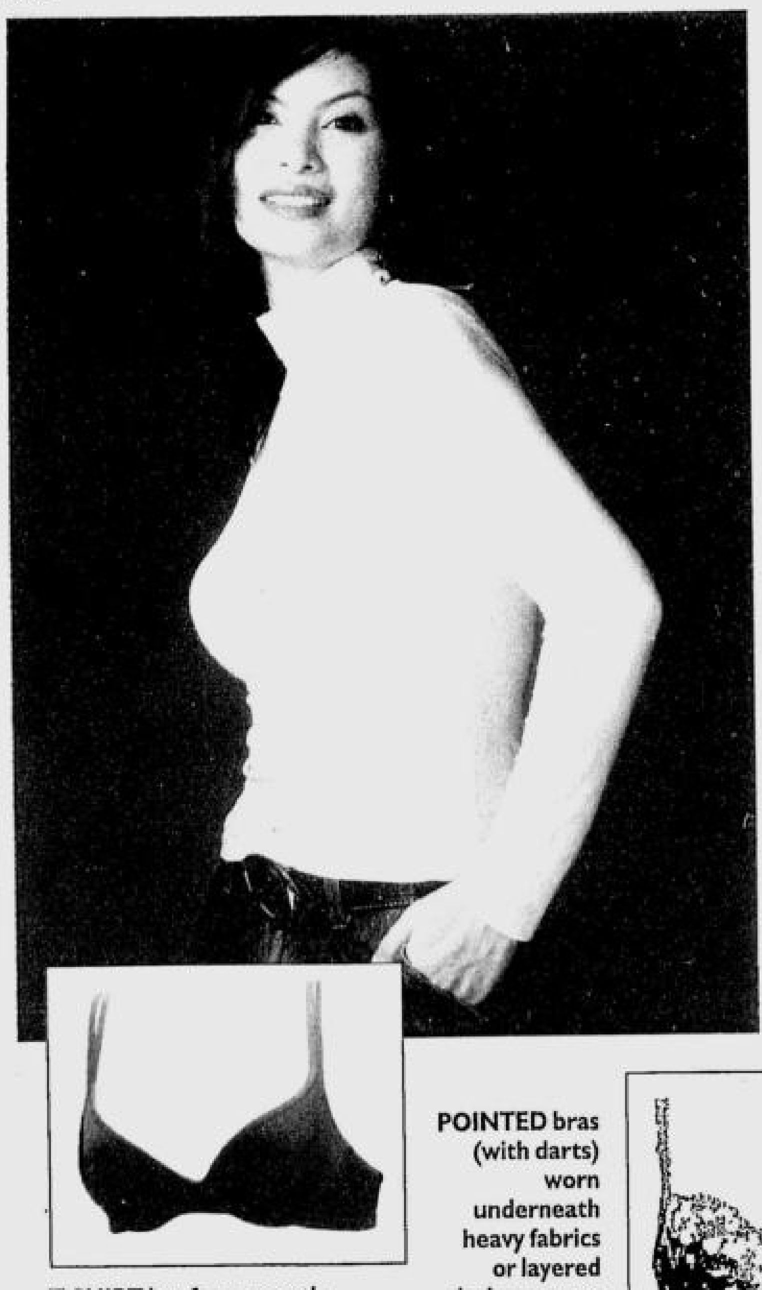
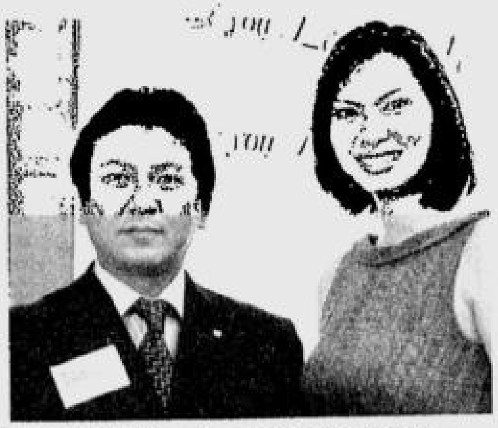

T-SHIRT bra for a smooth, seamless look.

POINTED bras (with darts) worn underneath heavy fabrics or layered clothes ensure a flattering look.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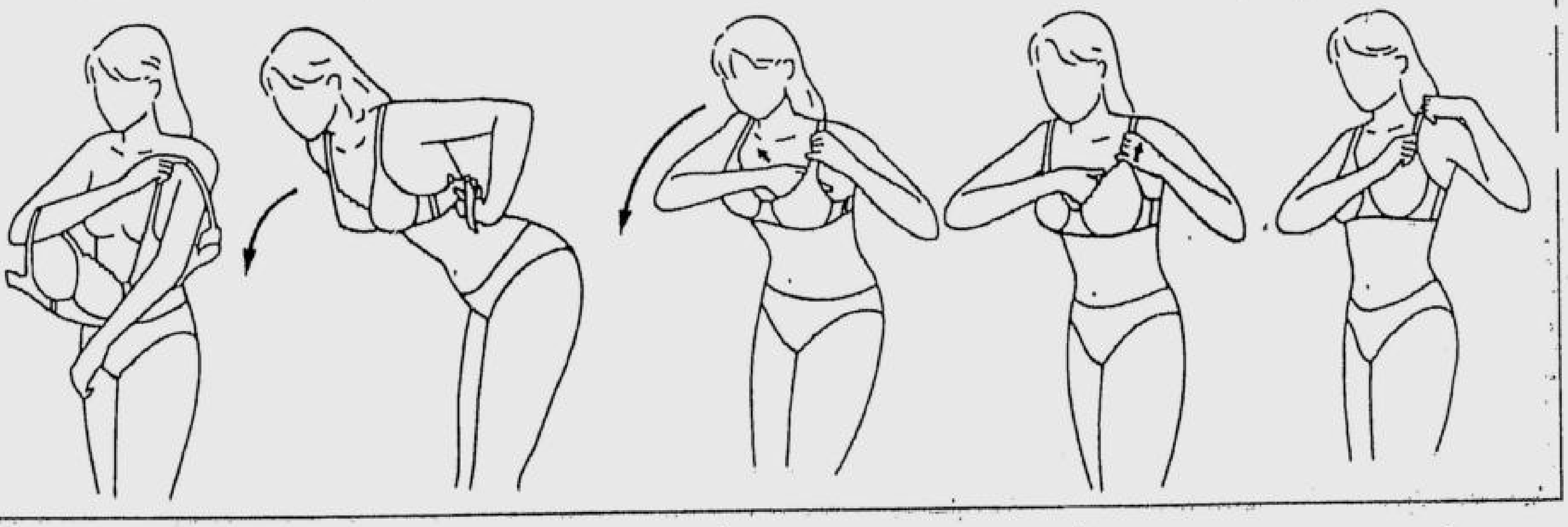
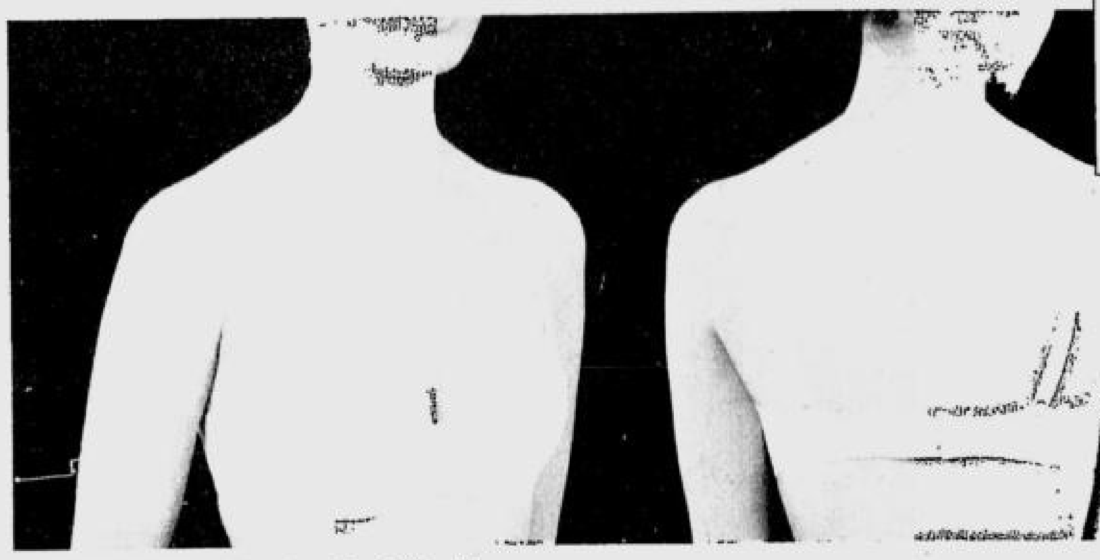
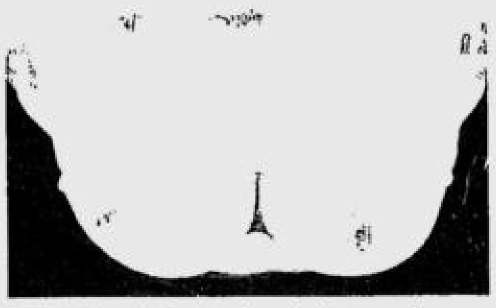
Courtesy of Philippine Wacoal Corp.



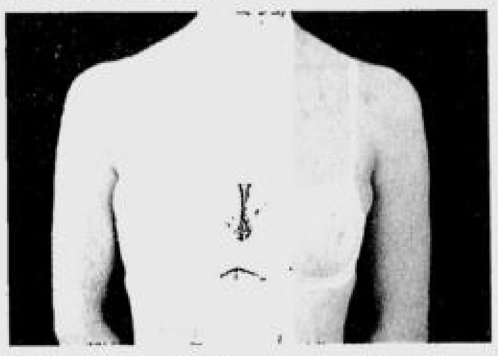


A PERFECTLY fitted bra should look like this.

FOR ATHLETIC activities, wear a properly reinforced sports bra.



THIS is how it looks when the bra cup is too small for the bust size.



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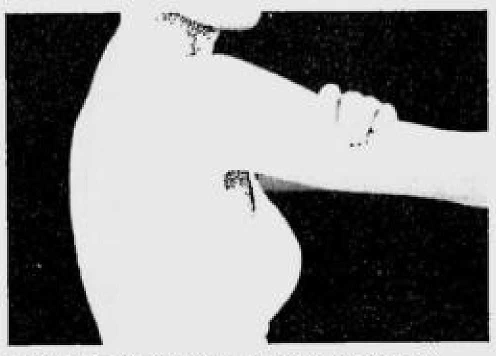

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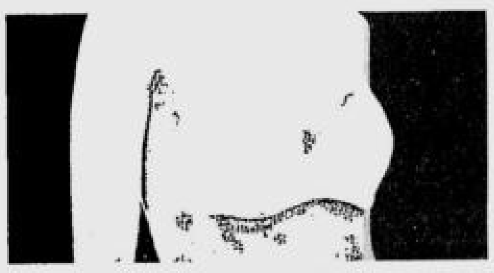

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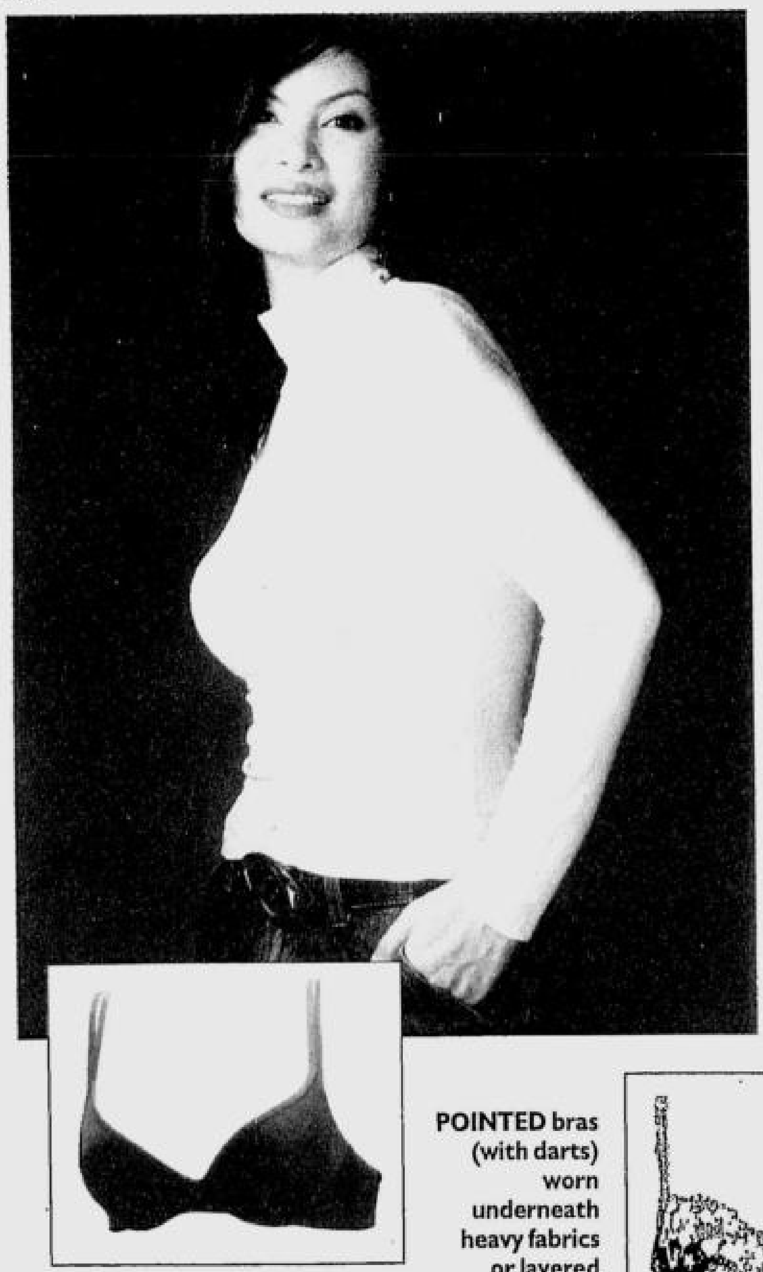

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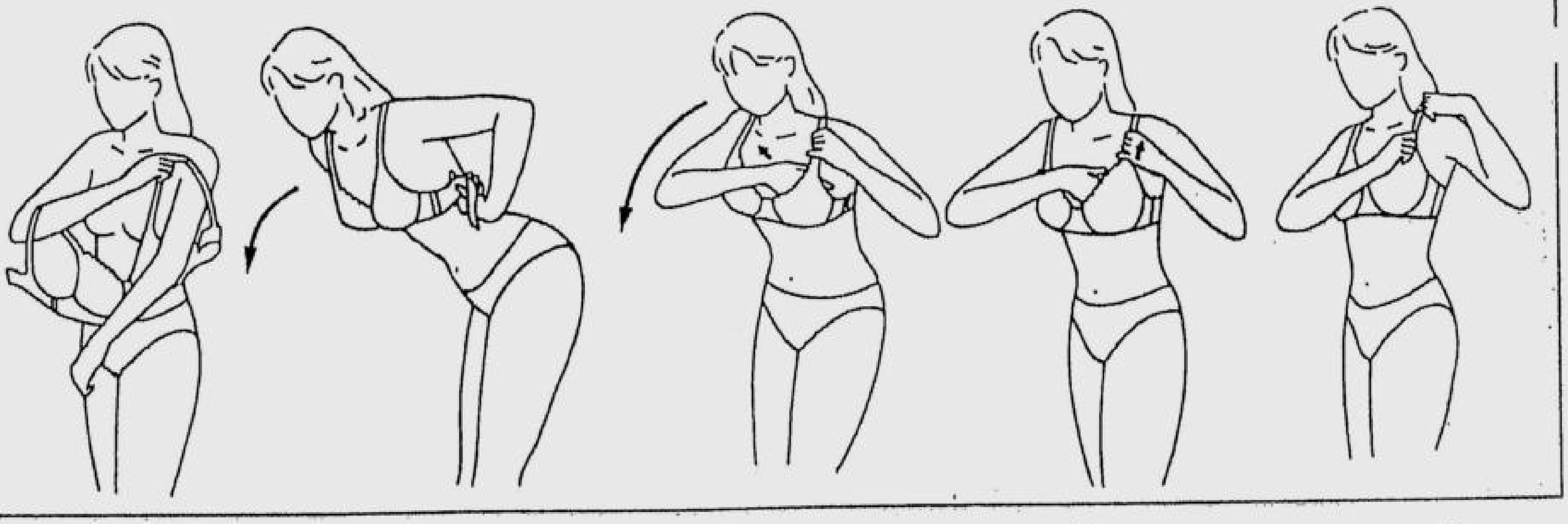
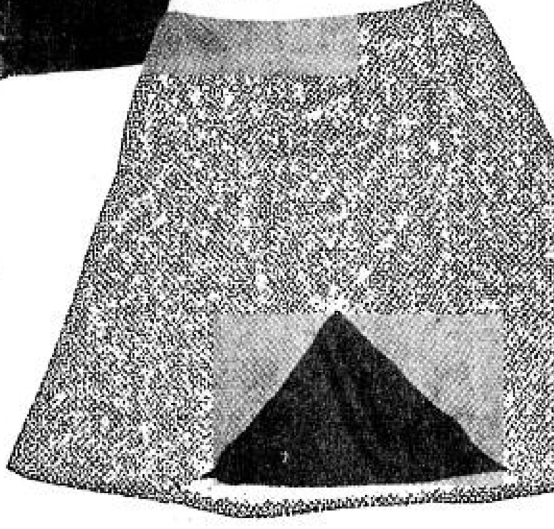


On top with the tank top

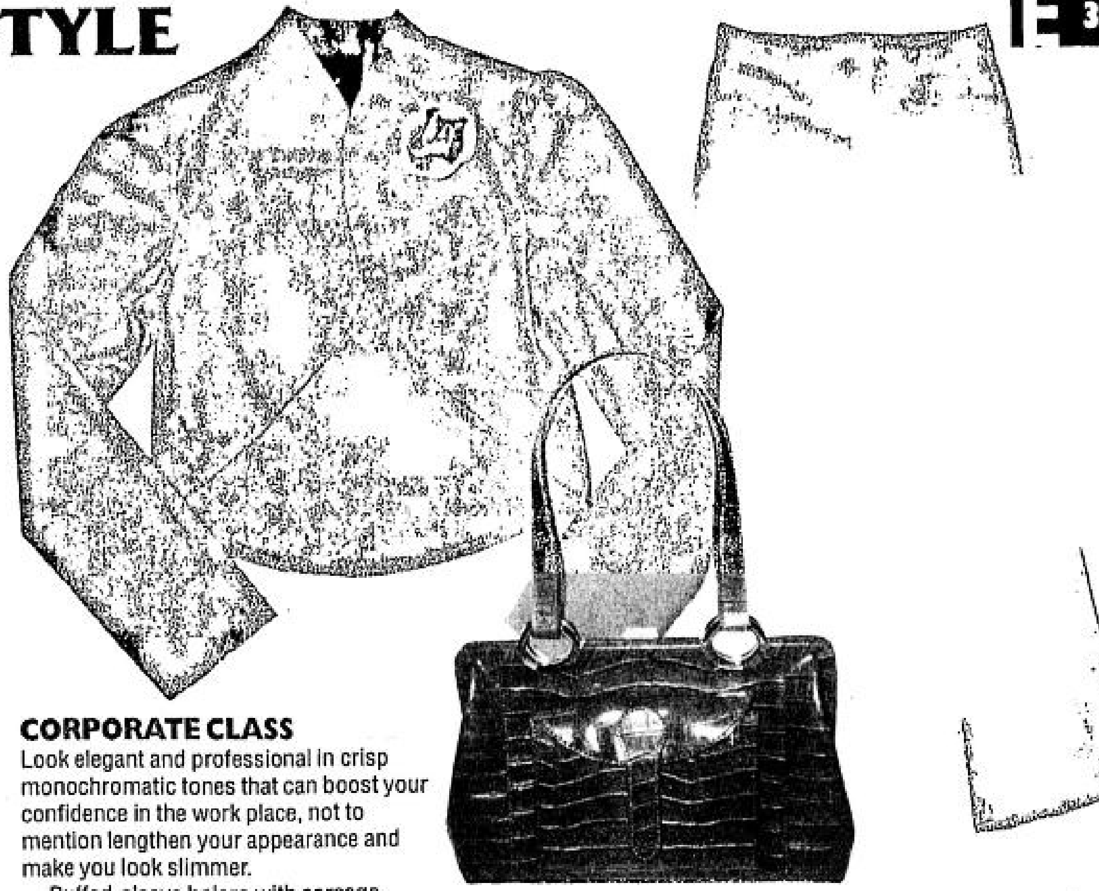
From page E1

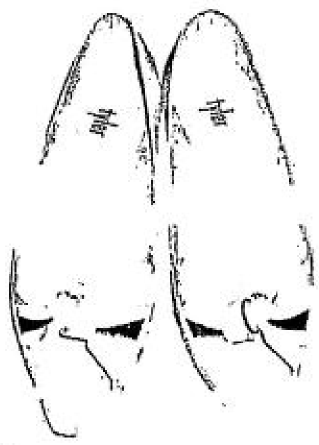


YIN AND YANG

Want to create a bit of irony? Wear your tank with a feminine skirt and match it with a zip-up denim jacket that's just a tad masculine in appearance. Combining contrasting elements and making them appear whole is one way of dressing fashionably.

Denim jacket (P2,350), circle skirt (P2,350), both from Tyler; white mules (P2,200), from Solea at the Power Plant Mall

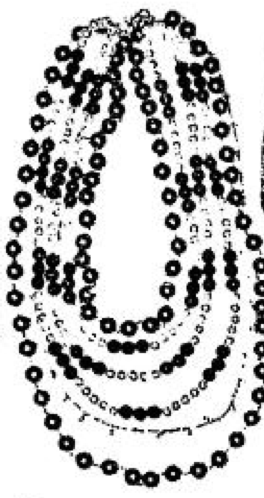


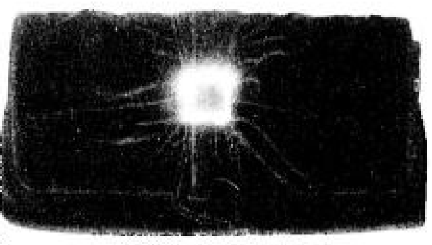


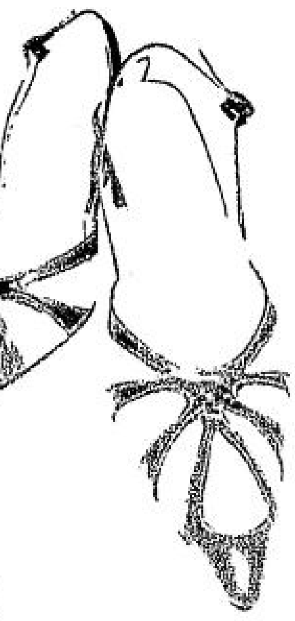
CORPORATE CLASS

Look elegant and professional in crisp monochromatic tones that can boost your confidence in the work place, not to mention lengthen your appearance and make you look slimmer.

Puffed-sleeve bolero with corsage (P2,150), cream trousers (P1,950), coffee mock croc bag (P2,750), beige flats, (P3,450), all from Tyler



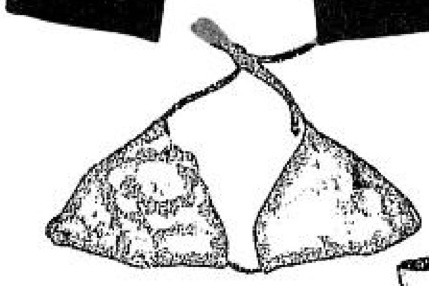


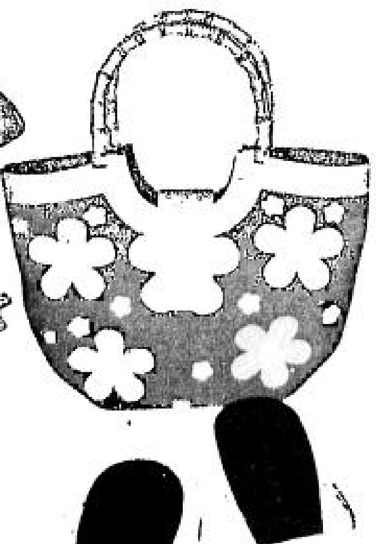


CHANNELING COCO

Take inspiration from fashion icon Coco Chanel by wearing your white tank with black trousers (for casual affairs) or tuxedo pants (for dressier events) and strands upon strands of pearls. The look is simple yet stylish and elegant.

Vintage white tank top, *ukay-ukay*; Tyler tuxedo pants (P1,950), Yulo Manila slingbacks (P2,600), available at Solea in the Power Plant Mall; faux pearl strands (P350-550), evening clutch (P1,450), all from Mimi Cosmetics at the Power Plant Mall





SUMMER STAPLE

The white tank is all you need during mini-breaks to the beach. Wear it on top of your bikini as a cover up and match with board shorts or a sarong. Complement with colorful accessories to create a summery vibe.

Sunset Brazil bikini (P3,275), Pa du du hot pink tote with bamboo handles (P2,150), lime thong sandals (P2,100), all from Solea at the Power Plant Mall

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Fashion Design Jan.31-Feb.11 MWF 9-6
Basic Pattern Feb.1-12 T-Th-Sat 9-6
Advance Pattern Feb.14-19 M-Sat 9-6
Haute Couture Feb.21-26 M-Sat 9-6
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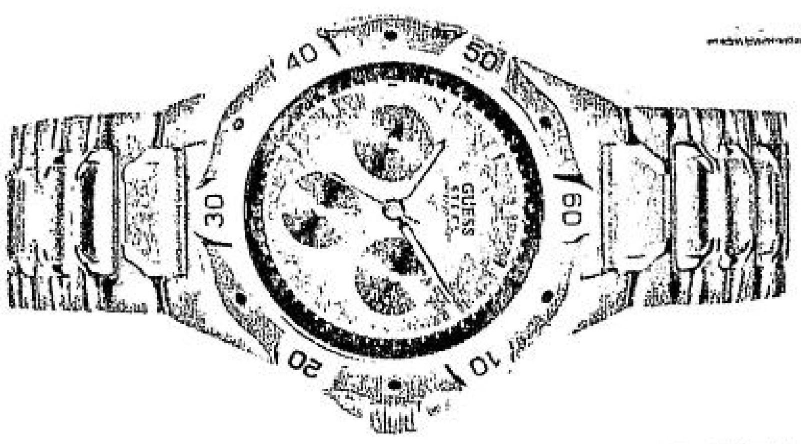
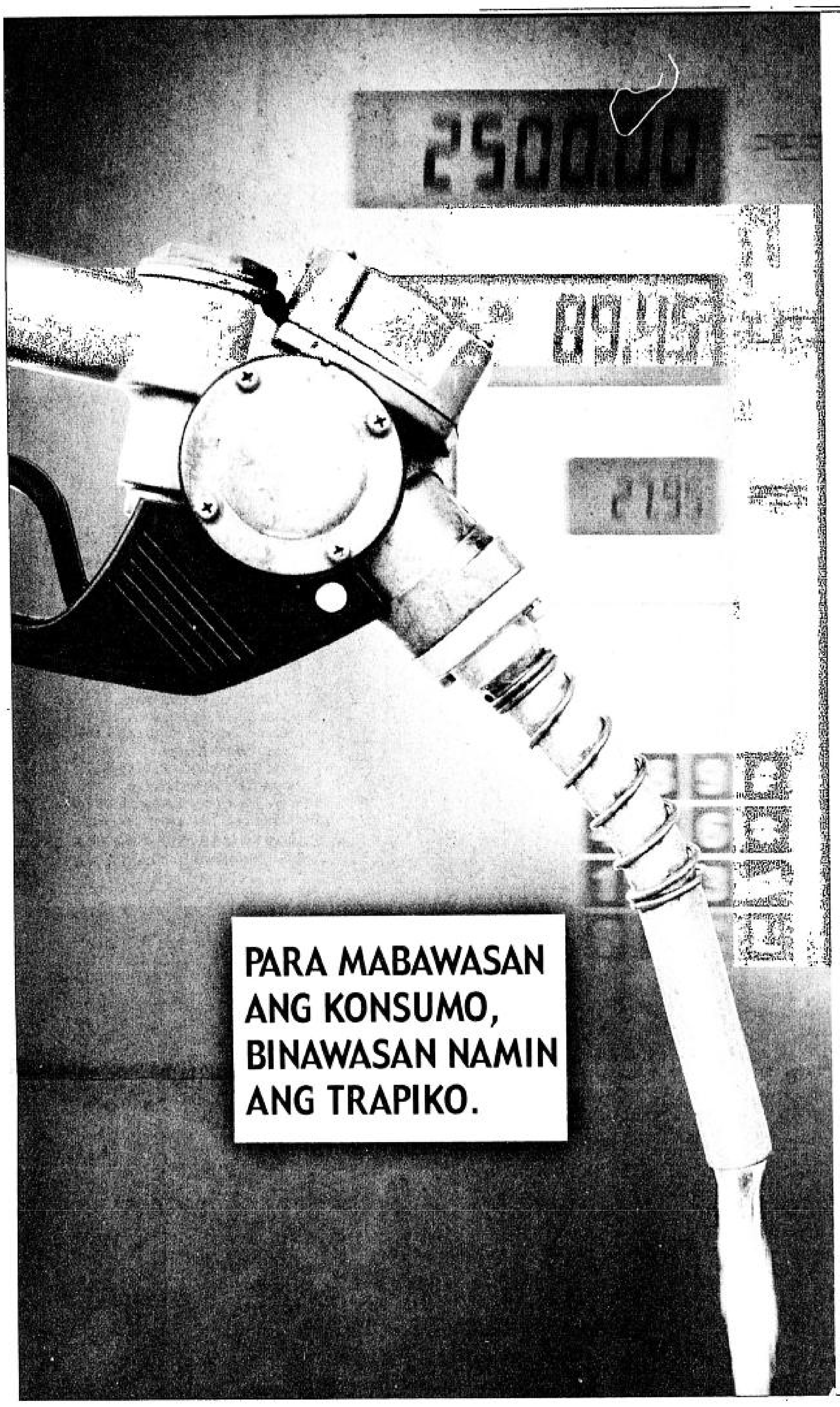


FUNKY, FUNCTIONAL TIMEPIECES

Guess watches are innovative, funky and frivolous, but always sexy and functional. The watches sport interesting features such as the Indi-glo, a patented lighting system that illuminates the entire watch so wearers can see the time even under low-light conditions. The Indi-glo feature is activated by a simple push of a button. Guess watches are water-resistant, remaining in perfect appearance and functioning condition even when exposed to rain or moisture. The Waterpro Chronograph Watch, for instance, is water-resistant up to 300 ft and has a stainless steel band with clasp closure. Its round casing has a blue gradient face and chronograph dials for day, date and time, and the hands and numbers glow in the dark. Every Guess watch comes with a 10-year warranty from the date of purchase, with the batteries lasting for a good two to three years. The new line of Guess Watches are available at leading watch and jewelry stores.



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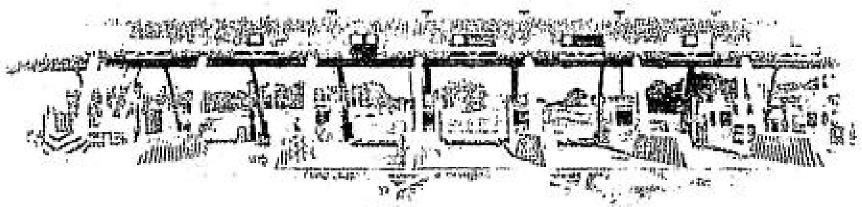

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P99
DUNKIN' DONUTS
Choco Rings

Filativa is a younger and more fashionable version of Italian sportswear brand Fila

RED, white and black

HOODED lux

Hipper take on sport chic

Text by Alex Y. Vergara
Photos by Jim Guiao Punzalan

THE TEEN wear scene promises to get bigger and merrier this year with the launching of yet another brand, Filativa.

Dan & Jim Manufacturing Corp., the company behind the new brand, also showed the latest collection of casual and sporty ensembles from Playboy in a recent fashion show at the Auto Stadium directed by designer Peter Lim.

Positioned as a younger and supposedly hipper version of Italian sportswear brand Fila, Filativa aims to capture sporty female teenagers and young adults with razorback and cropped tank tops, figure-hugging halters and tight fitting bottoms with flared hemlines in a mix of fabrics with just the right stretch and breathing room.

"Our clothes are light and sporty," says Gigi Tan Garcia, Dan & Jim's corporate secretary and chief in-house designer. "But with the right styling, they can be worn almost anywhere other than the gym."

As a sub licensee of Filativa, Dan & Jim is tasked to design and manufacture Fila's teen wear line for Jose Mari and Cris Albert of I Sports Life, Fila's sole licensee in the Philippines. The Albert couple is in charge of approving Garcia's designs.

Garcia plans to introduce Filativa pieces later this year in shades other than Fila staples

HIPPER/ F3

LAYER 'em.

SHORT and cropped

NEW YEAR BLOWOUT
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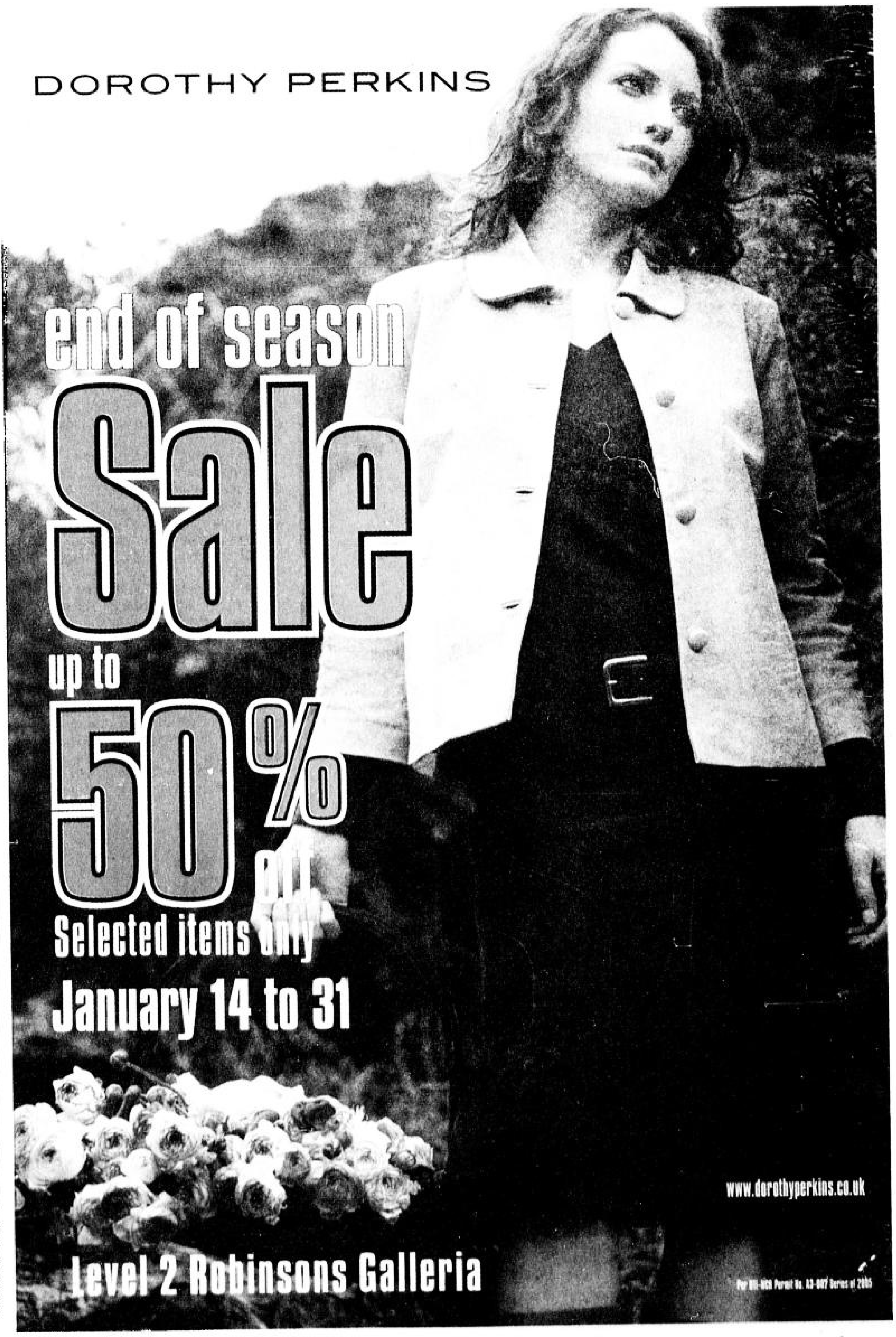


DOROTHY PERKINS

SIGNATURE PIECE. Nocturnal Collection by Loang & Noi

ROCOCO-STYLE jewelry inspired by the city of Milan (Urban Chic), from D'Meyson Jewellery

SASSY Jazz (Jewel Fashion), inspired by New York City (Urban Chic), from Soo Kee Jewellery

ELEGANT champagne and oyster-gray pearls with sparkling tiny diamonds make up this chic pearl earrings, ring and necklace set.

OCEAN Breeze inspired by "The Little Mermaid" (Jewel Fantasy), Jewellery, from Soo Kee

Singapore's sparkling jewelfest

DANIEL Lim of Soo Kee Jewellery; CK Lim of TianPo Jewellery; Italian Ambassador to Singapore Dr. Guido Scalici and his wife; Koh Lee Hwee of Lee Hwa Jewellery; Gerald Lee of the Singapore Tourism Board; Johnny Wham of Goldheart Jewelry; Rosalind Foong-Lim of TianPo Jewellery; and Sam Lew of D'Meyson Jewellery

PHILIPPINE Star's Cecil Zamora Van Starten and *moi* pose with Singapore's Lion exhibit in the hotel gardens.

VISAYAN Daily Star's Edouard Garcia; Lillian Ong-Clonts, brilliant manager of Jewellery, Watch and Gift Department of the STB; and Preview magazine's Isabelle Andaya

OUR tour guide in Singapore, Winnie, eating Indian delights on banana-leaf covered trays in front of Mustafa's Little India

DELICIOUS truffles chocolate at the Thos SB of the Raffles Hotel's specialty gourmet shop

WITHOUT BATTING AN EYELASH

Maurice Arcache

Photos by **Alex Van Hagen** on **Kodak Max**

SINGAPORE'S jewelry festival was a blast!

Yes, dahlings, Singapore presented a unique jewelry shopping experience.

Serving as a gateway to other Asian countries, Singapore has now established itself as a jewelry hub of Asia through its Jewel Fest 2004.

We checked in at the super popular Regent Club of the Regent Singapore, a Four Seasons hotel. We later met the dynamic, super-efficient Singapore Tourism Board manager, the brilliant **Lillian Ong-Clonts** of the Jewellery, Watch and Gift Department of the Tourism.Shopping Division.

We were then treated to an absolutely fantastic gourmet lunch in the hotel's popular Summer Palaces Chinese Restaurant. The scallop dumplings, pan-fried silver cod, and the delicately fine poached local spinach with fresh lily bulbs and Shrimeji mushrooms in a smooth broth were delicious.

But everyone went gaga over the cream of aloe vera, water chestnut and sago pearls, with green tea ice cream. Most of us asked for seconds.

That evening, we were whisked off to the grand opening of the Jewelry Festival. Cocktails were served inside the eye-catching Jewel Pavilion of the Ngee Ann City Civic Plaza, which was packed with Singapore's *alta sociedad* and buyers from all over Asia and Europe.

Once seated, we were dazzled by the breathtaking sight of top Italian jewelry stores, such as Balocchi Preziosi, Climento, lo Si, Laurentia Gioelli, Nanis, Marce Vicego, and Piero Milano. Wow! Their designs came in classic, modern or futuristic.

Jaw-dropping jewelry came in platinum, gold, silver, diamond and semi-precious stones.

Also featured were Singapore's best jewelry shops, such as Carat Club, Jewel Boc, Queen's Jewellers, Aspial, La Putrie, and Loang & Noli, which featured the one-of-a-kind purple gold.

There were also the Malaysian tiaras and cascades of different gems, punctuated by diamonds.

Also featured were renowned Swiss jewelers **Golay** and **Michael Youssoufian**, whose grandfather was the personal jeweler to the then royal court of Egypt, **King Fouad** and **King Farouk**, no less.

All of the fabulous bling-blings were beautifully shown off by some 40 of the most gorgeous models, who made their grand entrance dressed in long black gowns while they held up black masks over their faces.

The presentation's theme was Flight of Desire. The next week, the motif was Urban Chic, and much later, Jewel Fantasy.

Next morning we had an excellent breakfast at Regent's Executive Lounge and got ready for another hectic day. **Edouard Garcia** of the Visayan Daily Star and I dashed to Orchard Road for some quick shopping.

Ahh, the absolute pleasure of walking under all those shady trees on the wide sidewalk! It is something that I love about Singapore.

More jewelry

Our group then visited the Ottoman Sultan's jewelry exhibit at the fantastic Ancient Civilization Museum.

Since we only had a day left, our adorable guide, **Winnie**, took us to our next stop, brunch at the classic Raffles Hotel, where the hotel's nice PR, **Iris Chan**, met us over dimsum and tea at the hotel's An Teng's Bakery Café.

We later breezed through the lush tropical gardens of the Raffles, to shake off the calories we just acquired.

We dropped by the Essentials Beautiful, where we got suggestions on what perfect fragrance to use. Needless to say, we couldn't stop ourselves from trying other scents.

Winnie had to restrain us from overstaying and rushed us over to our next stop, the Blue Print Concept Store, where we met all of Singa's talented up and coming designers. *Naturellement*, the gals shopped immediately.

Next stop—lunch. This time, at the Hyatt hotel where our favorite woman of STB, Lillian Ong-Clonts, met us.

After a super continental meal, we were given a tour of the *grandioso restaurante* by the food and beverage manager, who was tall and drop-dead good-looking. One of the gals was absolutely smitten by him. We couldn't blame her.

Then we had a long tour of upscale jewelry watch stores, ranging from Audermas Piquet's luxury line boutique, to the Yafriro, one of Singapore's leading luxury watch retailers specializing in collector's watches, such as Roger Dubuis, De Witt, Alain Silverstein, and Parmagiani.

Instantly, I thought of my pals, popular businessmen **Al Tengco** and **Choy Cojuangco**, who would have loved to be there, since they are watch collectors.

"You are now free till 6:30 p.m., when we meet at the lobby for dinner," said Winnie.

And before you could bat an eyelash, Edouard and I separated from the gals and did our brisk walking on Orchard Road to shop! shop! shop!

First stop was Prada, then Sara, then the Takashimaya Dept. Store food and gourmand floor, since Edouard refused to go to Manille without getting several boxes of one of the best dark chocolates we had ever tasted, the Japanese chocolate called Royce, considered a top bitter chocolate.

With our hands full of shopping bags, we brisk-walked back to our hotel to get ready for dinner.

We sat down for our farewell dinner at the excellent Bacco, an Italian resto. Here we met the other media delegations from China, Malaysia, Indonesia, Australia, and Bahrain.

With an absolutely full tummy, we tried to dance all the yummy Italian calories away. So off we went to the New Asia Bar, which afforded guests a fabulous view of the whole city.

We watched glamorous clubbers dancing below our vantage point. While sipping our glamorously chilled champagne, Lillian, Edouard and I smiled at each other because we knew that this definitely wouldn't be our last "Singapore Swing."

Thanks to the darlings of the Singapore Tourism Board: Lillian Ong-Clonts, **Rena Tan Liling**, and nice **Kevin Poh**. You all did it again! Bravo!

SUMMER IS HERE. For that richly tanned back, a long gold chain with matching dangling earrings

THE STUNNINGLY gorgeous Vivian Tan was the dazzling emcee at the JewelFest cocktail opening.

GERALD Lee of the Singapore Tourism Board opened the Jewelry Festival.

FRENCH-TRAINED expert Jean Loy briefed us on what Fragrance is all about at the Essentials Raffles Hotel Arcade.

THE FABULOUS opening of the Couture Splendour runway show featured dazzling jewelry.

Hipper take on sport chic

From page F1

such as black, white and red. The brand's younger line will also come in yummy colors such as yellow, pink, periwinkle and lilac.

"I also plan to use French terry for a number of skirts," Garcia adds. "What's exciting about this coming series is the debut of the Filativa name."

Dan & Jim is also the Philippine licensee of New York-based Playboy International Inc., the lifestyle brand inspired by the men's magazine with the same name. As such, it manufactures and markets Playboy's female apparel, while Cinderella takes care of the brand's men's line.

In the case of Playboy, Garcia has her designs approved by people at the brand's New York office. She and her counterparts the world over get their directions from fashion forecasts issued by the brand's headquarters.

Sexy

Playboy clothes are sexy and a bit revealing, but far from risqué, says Garcia. In keeping with the Playboy spirit, as envisioned by founder Hugh Hefner, the pieces are for the carefree and fun-loving woman with a penchant for parties and the good life. If you're a fan of Christina Aguilera, Britney Spears, Paris Hilton, Pink and Victoria Beckham, then you're in good company, as these famous women have been caught wearing Playboy.

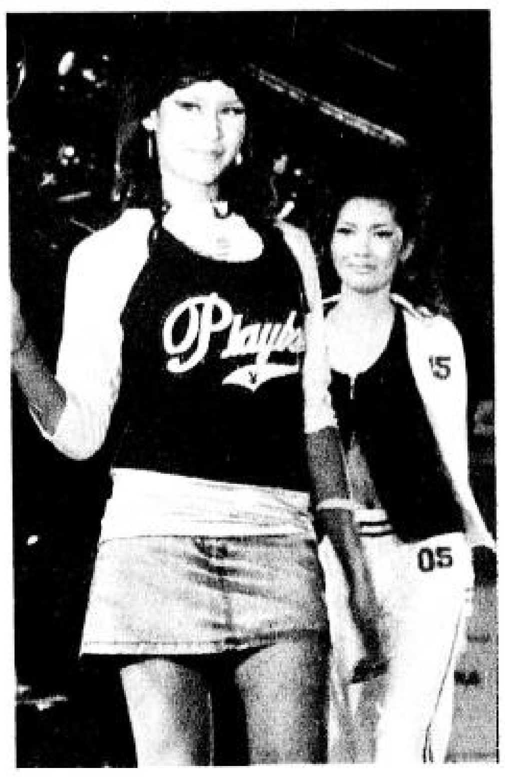
To update the Playboy look and give it a more "lux" feel, Lim incorporated lacey headbands and skirts and metallic accessories, from shoes to belts. This party-going lifestyle is best reflected in themes inspired by "Lala Land" and "Fantasy Island."

Lala Land captures today's young women's preference for eclectic dressing with versatile pieces that can be mixed and matched with other styles and brands. There will be peek-a-boos and backless tops aplenty in keeping with the Bunny spirit. Dominant colors for summer will be yellow, celadon and "subdued" red.

"Today's youngsters aren't as keen as we once were when it comes to matching their clothes," says Garcia. "They mix and match items to come up with a different, totally unpredictable look. It's the unexpected twist that makes their look more interesting and unique."

Fantasy Island is Playboy's take on the Boracay look, with its fair share of halters, sleeveless tops and tiered skirts. Red, tangerine and turquoise are among the key colors. In lieu of giant prints are discreet flora splotches and bunny outlines on tops made of stretch and knitted materials for that added cling.

E-mail the author at avergara@inquirer.com.ph

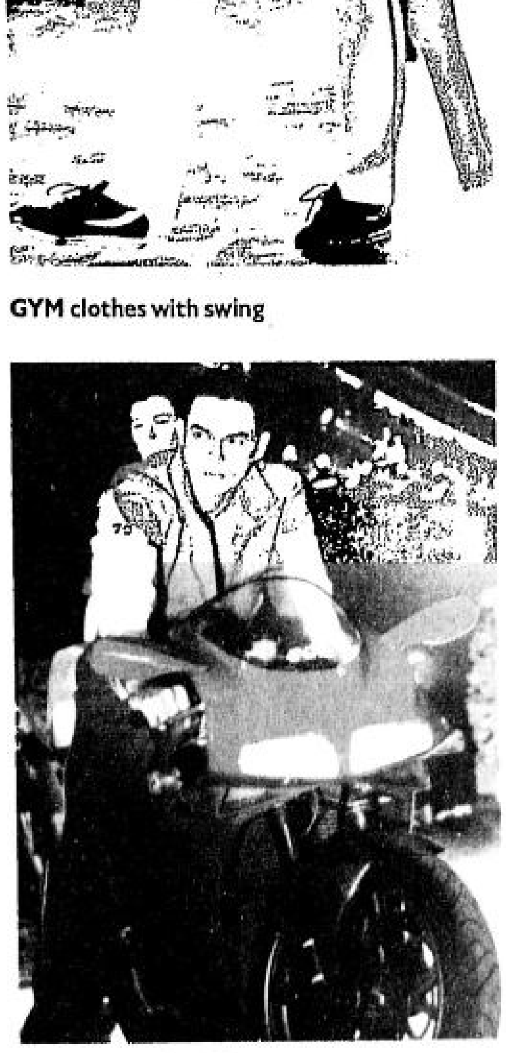


PLAYGIRL wears Playboy.

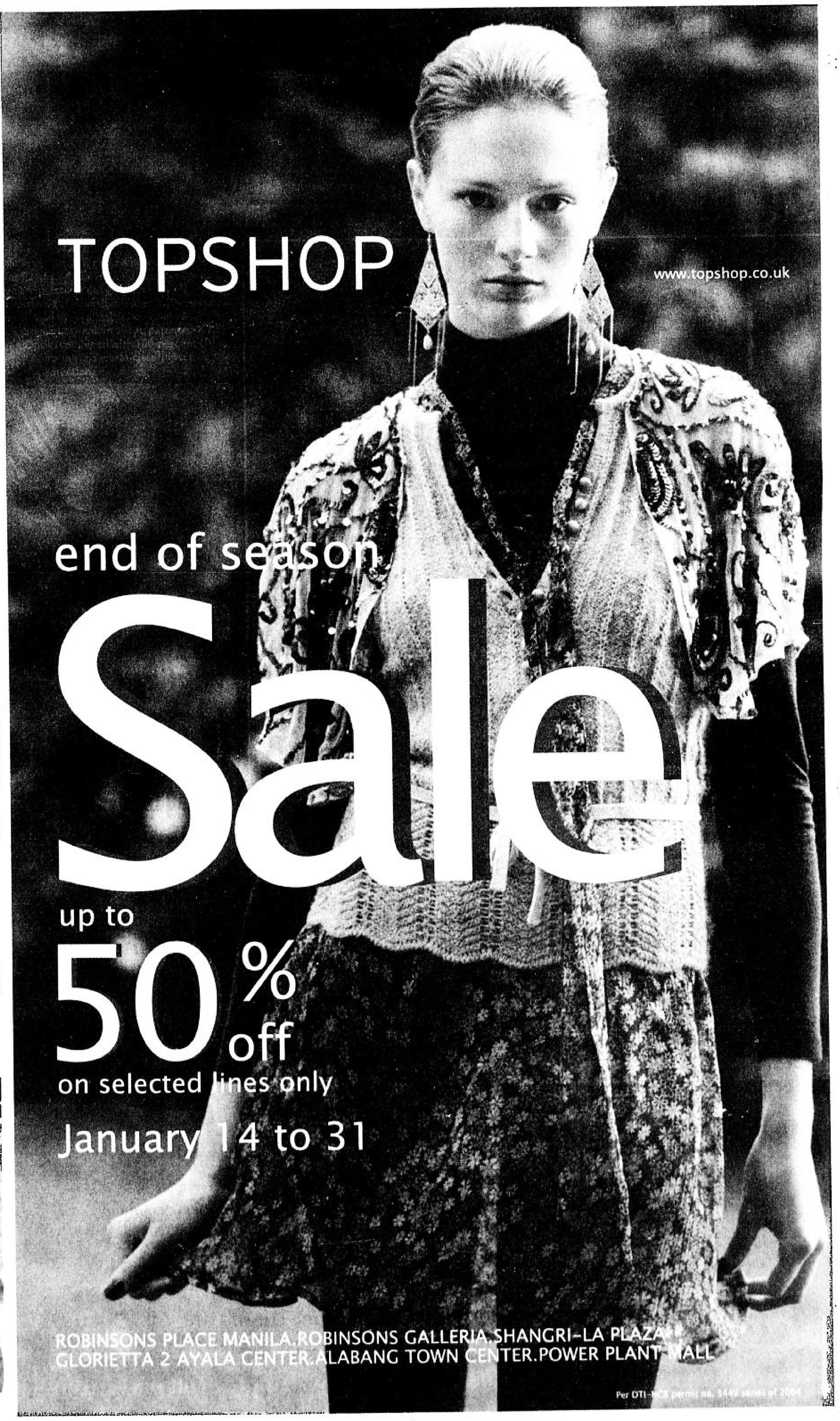
THEY need not be rubber shoes.

OFF-SHOULDER cling

GYM clothes with swing



WIND breaker



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It was the worst of times

For the 45th year, Mr. Blackwell lists the sad, the bad and the downright ugly in fashion

PARIS Hilton AFP

LOS ANGELES—"Desperate Housewives" star Nicolette Sheridan, known for short skirts, tight pants and a famously dropped towel in a television ad, was named the worst-dressed woman of 2004 on Tuesday by fashion designer Mr. Blackwell.

In his 45th annual no-puns-barred list of what he calls "The Bad, The Sad and The Downright Ugly," Mr Blackwell said the 41-year-old actress, who plays a suburban vamp in the hit ABC series, is "a taste-free pain." "Let's crown her the Tacky Temptress of Wisteria Lane!" he added as he placed her at the top of his list, which has become a Hollywood tradition.

Also on this year's list were teen actress Lindsay Lohan, sisters Jessica and Ashlee Simpson and a potpourri of other celebrities: Courtney Love, Paris Hilton, Serena Williams, Britney Spears, Paula Abdul, Meryl Streep and Anna Nicole Smith.

Mr. Blackwell said the biggest fashion faux pas of 2004 was Janet Jackson's famed "Wardrobe Malfunction," which involved her briefly baring a breast during the Super Bowl's half-time show.

But he added that her peek-a-boo flash was a "total tempest in a teapot as far as I'm concerned. If you really want a stylistic scandal, look no further than the Ten Terrors gracing this year's List." Sheridan caused her own controversy last year, provoking some 50,000 complaints when, during a promotional spot for "Desperate Housewives" preceding "Monday Night Football," she dropped a towel and jumped, apparently naked, into the arms of receiver Terrell Owens.

Mr. Blackwell had no comment on that, possibly because he found the towel tasteful.

He gave second spot on his list to teen star Lohan, calling her, "Over-hyped and underdressed. What's happened to Lindsay? When it comes to fashion she's in a schizophrenic frenzy!"

The singing Simpson sisters tied for third, with Mr. Blackwell decrying, "From gaudy to grim to downright frenetic these two prove that bad taste is positively genetic!"

He called singer Courtney Love "a Medusa stuck in a meltdown mode" and named her fourth. Socialite Paris Hilton was fifth: "This is one Hilton that should be closed for renovation."

In sixth place was tennis champ Serena Williams, whom Mr. Blackwell said has moved "from the queen of tennis to fatal fashion menace." He was no less unkind to Britney Spears, saying she is "a clothes encounter of the catastrophic kind."

He dismissed singer Paula Abdul, calling her "a paint by numbers fashion foul." As for Meryl Streep in ninth place, Mr. Blackwell said, "Forget 'Lemony Snicket,' Streep packs the fashion punch of Jiminy Cricket!"

The final victim on his list was former Playmate married to a millionaire Anna Nicole Smith, whom Mr. Blackwell said looked like "a rag doll trapped in a wind machine."

On the former fashion designer's best-dressed list were Natalie Portman, Nicole Kidman, Barbara Walters, Kate Winslet, Annette Bening, Oprah Winfrey, Scarlett Johansson, Gwen Stefani, Teri Hatcher and Jennifer Garner.

Mr. Blackwell's lists are a Hollywood tradition and over the years have poked fun at everyone, from Queen Elizabeth to Elizabeth Taylor. *Reuters*

LINDSAY Lohan is among the worst when it comes to wardrobe. AP

NICOLETTE Sheridan, from the television series "Desperate Housewives," tops the list. AP

JESSICA Simpson and her sister Ashley (right) tied for third place. REUTERS

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BRITNEY Spears

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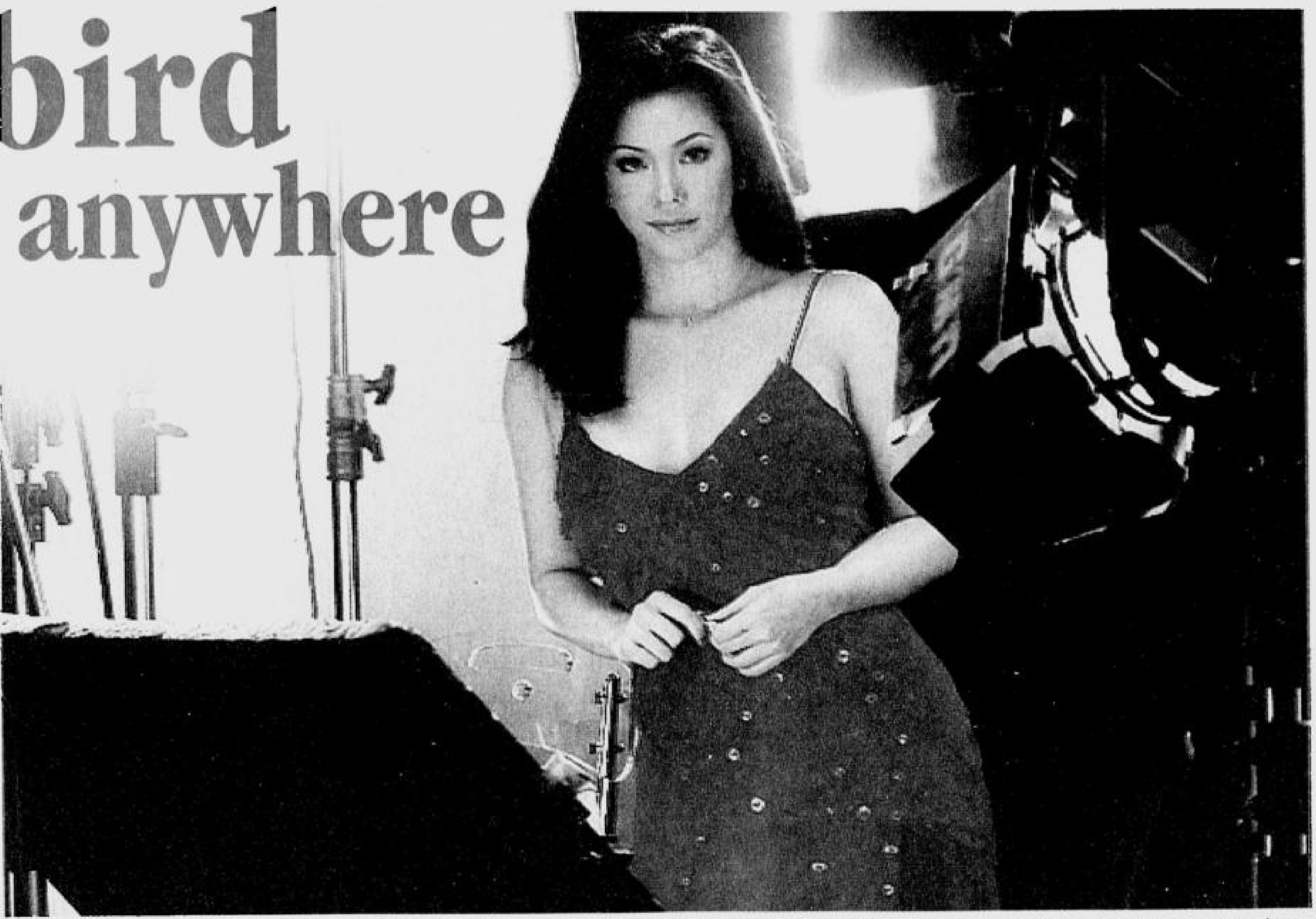
Songbird not flying anywhere



WHO'S MOVING? Regine denies she has been sending feelers to ABS-CBN, her GMA contract has expired or her services are now available to other networks.

ASIA'S Songbird Regine Velasquez isn't flying anywhere as far as TV networks are concerned.

Regine and her management company, Aria Productions, vehemently deny that they would leave GMA 7.

Regine laughed at the rumors that said she she has been sending feelers to ABS-CBN executives, that her GMA contract has already expired and that her services are already available to other networks.

"Where did that rumor come from," Regine guffawed. "I don't have any contract with GMA.

"My only contract with [GMA] is concerning the soap ['Forever in My Heart]," she explained. "That's the one that just expired because I signed only a one-season contract.

"I'm very happy with GMA. They have been very supportive of me and I'm very grateful with the trust they have given me. I cannot be happier. ['Forever in My Heart'] has just ended its run, and 'Pinoy Pop Superstar' and 'SOP' are also doing well. GMA has also been very supportive of my singing career and my other projects."

End of 'Forever'

On "Forever in My Heart," the soulmate of Regine's character Angeline Sagrado will be revealed tonight, the soap's last night.

"Forever in My Heart" is the story of three souls, each searching for the one true love. Both Raphael (Richard Gomez) and Michael (Ariel Rivera) moved heaven and went through hell to prove their love for Angeline. But who is really meant for Angeline?

Michael and Angeline have finally tied the knot, but it doesn't seem to be the end of their troubles. Michael's ex-girlfriend, Elaine [Cindy Kurleto], has come out of hiding to make their lives miserable again. What evil plan does she have in store for them? And what will Michael do now that Raphael has re-entered the picture, determined to regain Angeline's love?

Will this mean the end of their marriage? Will their first kiss, which will happen this week, mean a promise to stay—or their kiss of goodbye?

Raphael has also parted ways with Stella [Dawn Zulueta], the woman he loved when he thought he had lost Angeline. But as soon as he realizes that he can freely come back to Angeline, a tragic incident happens which puts his plans in jeopardy.

Will Raphael see Angeline again? Or do the signs say that they are really not meant to be together?

Show with Pops

Besides her stellar TV career, Regine is busy getting ready for her back-to-back concert with another diva, concert queen Pops Fernandez. Their show, titled "Queens. . . . On Fire," is slated on Feb. 11 and 12 at the Ultra.

This the first time that the two performers will join forces.

Directed by Rowell Santiago with Raul Mitra and Homer Flores as musical directors, the Pops Fernandez-Regine Velasquez concert also features prince of pop Erik Santos as guest.

The show's musicians include Ric Mercado on guitar, Sonny Matias on second keyboard, Ferdinand Faustino on drums, Bobby Rasco on bass guitar and Raul Mitra as first keyboard.

"Queens. . . . On Fire" is produced by Star Media in cooperation with GMA 7 and presented by Smart. Tickets are available at Ticketworld, 891-5610, and Star Media, 854-3300 or 854-3322.

Talent group's new stunners, veterans add dazzle to the biz

THIS TALENT management group is always on the lookout for fresh faces, and has consistently provided the ideal environment in which to groom, develop and nurture its "finds."

ALV Productions, headed by Arnold Vegafria, recently beefed up its roster of big-name stars with a set of younger talents. One look at the whole stable, and it's clear how they're going to light up the local entertainment scene:

BONNEVIE

Dina Bonnevie continues to dazzle as Sofia in the top-rating *teleserye*, "Hiram." Ms. D is an ABS-CBN contract artist.

Singer Geneva Cruz's new album is due for release mid-year. The "Pop Princess" is currently on a bar tour that culminates in a major Valentine's Day concert.

Maritoni Fernandez is a "veteran" of several TV soaps. Jenine Desiderio just wrapped up production work on her next album, slated for release in February. She also appears as the wicked queen of the underworld in GMA 7's "Leya."

HIDALGO

Internationally acclaimed stage actress Pinky Amador, gears up for another tele-series and awaits the initial run of the New Voice stage production, "Oh, Romeo," this month. The young and bubbly Danica Sotto is seen regularly in ABS-CBN's "Krystala" and GMA's "Daddy Di Do Du." She is also one of the leading ladies in the year-opener action flick, "Uno," starring Ronnie Ricketts and Monsour Del Rosario. She is about to release her second album under Dyna Music.

BERNADETTE ALLYSON

More movies

2004 was a very successful year for Iya Villania, new "crush *ng bayan*." The resident "Myx" VJ and "ASAP Fanatic" co-host will soon be seen in two new ABS-CBN shows. Iya appeared in "Aishite Imasu" and "Beautiful Life," and is set to do more movies for Regal Films and Star Cinema. She will launch her singing career this year.

GARCIA

VILLANIA

SOTTO

MARQUEZ

CRUZ

DEL ROSARIO

JAY-R

The stunning Cheska Garcia, a favorite endorser of beauty products, is also cast in "Uno," and is set to do a tele-series and more movies this year. Bianca King is in GMA's "Mulawin" and has joined the cast of Cine Suerte Film's "Manaoag."

Multi-talented jazz singer Lynn Sherman was seen in the stage musical "Cabaret" and appeared in "Forever My Love" with Oyo Boy Sotto and Nadine Samonte. She will front-act for Norah Jones' Manila concert in March.

MACEDA

Arnee Hidalgo, a BS Math graduate of the Ateneo de Manila, just got back from the States, where she completed higher studies. The dusky *morena* made it big last year with her remake of "Cold Summer Nights," and "True." This year, she releases her third single under Universal Records.

Bernadette Allyson appears in "SCQ Reload," where she plays Melissa Ricks' mother. Pinky Marquez is in GMA 7's "Forever In My Heart," as Ariel Rivera's mom. Tootsie Guevara, currently in the United States, will release her new album this year. Jannelle So, also in the US, will soon be home to resume TV emceeing.

After giving birth to her second child, Plinky Recto looks forward to hosting a health/lifestyle TV show. Gary Estrada is in "Mulawin," but wants to do a sports show or a sitcom.

RECTO

Taekwondo expert Monsour del Rosario teams up with Ronnie Ricketts in "Uno," and will soon be endorsing health products. A tele-series is also in the works.

Jay-R appeared in Regal's MMFF entry, "So Happy Together," and is set to do more movies—plus a solo concert at the Big Dome and TV hosting projects.

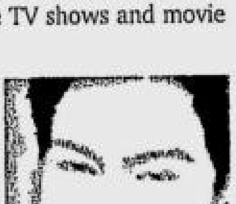
Smokey M reunion

Jeffrey Hidalgo, formerly of Ryan Cayabyab's Smokey Mountain, releases a new album this month. He was in the smash theater hit, "All About Men (Penis Talks)," and is planning a Valentine's Day show, plus a Smokey Mountain reunion concert.

Marco Alcaraz, athlete/model-turned-actor, was in ABS-CBN's "It Might Be You," and played crucial roles in "Beautiful Life" and "Aishite Imasu 1941." He is playing the lead role in "Manaoag."

KING

Carlo Maceda was also in "All About Men" and the tele-series "Maid in Heaven." Pretty boy Paolo Paraiso landed the third slot in Cosmopolitan Philippines' "Gorgeous Bachelors 2004 Poll." He appeared in "So Happy Together," "All About Men," and "Maid in Heaven." More TV shows and movie roles are in store.



ALCARAZ

The rap duo Krook & Jolo released "Focused" under Universal Records last year. PBA sportscaster Paolo Trillo is set to do more TV shows. Kenji Marquez, a model/actor seen in "Basta't Kasama Kita," is making more movies and another TV series.

Stage actor/director Michael Williams, last seen in "Cabaret," is preparing for "Oh, Romeo." Basketball jock Rob Duat is still one of Bench's high-profile celebrity endorsers.

Ram Revilla, who made his movie debut in "Anak Ka ng Tatay Mo," will soon star in a tele-series and some movies under Regal Films. Sen. Lito Lapid's son Maynard is a Regal Films contract star.

Amanda Griffin, one of Channel V's hottest VJs, co-hosts the lifestyle show "F" and the travel/adventure series, "Team Explorer." US-born Jimmy Muna, a budding rap artist/composer, was featured in Kyla's hit-song, "Not Your Ordinary Girl." He will soon launch his own album.

WILLIAMS

LAPID

PETE ROA, with wife Boots Anson, for his contributions to Philippine radio and television

Tribute to Pete Roa at Merk's

A TRIBUTE to Pete Roa for his substantial contributions to radio and TV programming in the country will be staged at Merk's Bar Bistro in Makati on Wednesday, Jan. 19.

A former producer-director of ABS-CBN, program director of Channel 3 and 9, announcer and set director of Channel 5, newscaster on "Newswatch" and manager for overseas broadcast of Radio Veritas, Pete introduced many firsts in the electronic medium, including his direction of the first Bolshoi Ballet performance in the Philippines, the first Motorcycle Grand Prix, the first zarzuela ("Walang Sugat") on TV, the first microwave link telecast of the Seven Last Words and the first pre-school kiddie show ("Romper Room").

"He represented what was decent and innovative, not to mention the high educational quality of his programming, when television was still quality-oriented, not rating-oriented," said Richard Merk, who is spearheading the tribute to Pete. "A man who gave sense and sensibility to the electronic medium deserves to be recognized."

Married to actress Boots Anson-Roa, who shared his love for theater, film and broadcast, Pete was vice president of the Film Development Foundation until his retirement in 2001.

For inquiries on the Jan. 19 tribute to Pete Roa, call 757-4720 or 0917-7052250.

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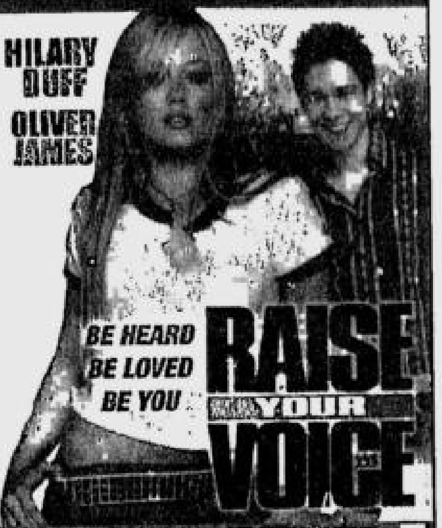

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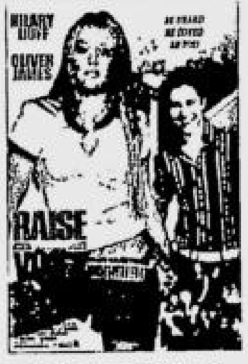

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1	AISHITE IMASU 1941
2	SPIRIT OF THE GLASS
3	PANAGHOY SA SUBA
4	BLADE TRINITY
5	ENTENG KABISOTE
6	OCEAN'S TWELVE
7	KUNG FU HUSTLE
8	RAISE YOUR VOICE
9	SO HAPPY TOGETHER
10	NATIONAL TREASURE
11	SIGAW
12	MANO PO 3

sm city manila

1	BLADE TRINITY
2	OCEAN'S TWELVE
3	IN SEARCH OF AN IMPOTENT MAN
4	KUNG FU HUSTLE
5	RAISE YOUR VOICE
6	BLADE TRINITY
7	SO HAPPY TOGETHER
8	SPIRIT OF THE GLASS
9	ENTENG KABISOTE
10	SIGAW
11	MANO PO 3
12	KUNG FU HUSTLE

sm city sta. mesa

1	BLADE TRINITY
2	SO HAPPY TOGETHER
3	KUNG FU HUSTLE
4	MANO PO 3
5	OCEAN'S TWELVE
6	SPIRIT OF THE GLASS
7	ENTENG KABISOTE
8	RAISE YOUR VOICE
9	IN SEARCH OF AN IMPOTENT MAN
10	NATIONAL TREASURE

sm city southmall

1	RAISE YOUR VOICE
2	SO HAPPY TOGETHER
3	BLADE TRINITY
4	KUNG FU HUSTLE
5	SIGAW
6	SPIRIT OF THE GLASS
7	ENTENG KABISOTE
8	OCEAN'S TWELVE
9	MANO PO 3
10	GEORGE AND THE DRAGON

sm city north edsa

1	IN SEARCH OF AN IMPOTENT MAN
2	SO HAPPY TOGETHER
3	MANO PO 3
4	ENTENG KABISOTE
5	RAISE YOUR VOICE
6	OCEAN'S TWELVE
7	BLADE TRINITY
8	KUNG FU HUSTLE

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1	BLADE TRINITY
2	ENTENG KABISOTE
3	IN SEARCH OF AN IMPOTENT MAN
4	KUNG FU HUSTLE

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1	OCEAN'S TWELVE
2	KUNG FU HUSTLE
3	BLADE TRINITY
4	SO HAPPY TOGETHER

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1	BLADE TRINITY
2	ENTENG KABISOTE
3	KUNG FU HUSTLE
4	OCEAN'S TWELVE

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January 22-23, 2005

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UNO MARTIAL ARTS COSTUME CONTEST

Dress the part! Join the UNO Martial Arts Costume Contest. Show up in your martial arts costume on the day of the premiere (January 18), and win for yourself P1,000.00. Plus other special prizes including, exclusive items from UNO and Dickies! Just register on the day of the premiere at the cinema lobby of SM North EDSA at 6pm.

"FAITHFULLY," RAYMOND

"Pampanga's Best," Raymond Manalo, is promoting "Faithfully," his debut album from Viva Records, at Star Mall-Las Piñas at 4 p.m. and at Star Mall-Alabang on Sunday, Jan. 16. Raymond will launch the album on Jan. 9 on ABS-CBN's "Asap Mania." "Faithfully" includes Raymond's revival of "Kung Alam Ko Lang," the carrier single which was a big hit for Toni Daya in the early '90s. "Faithfully" also contains "Kailangan Kita," Raymond's winning song in the "Search for a Star" competition. Other cuts include the title track composed by Vehnee and Doris Saturno, "Muli," "You Changed My Life in a Moment," "Kung Kapiling Ka," "Pasensya Na Mahal Kita," "Ngumingiti," "I Love You," "Paskong Walang Ikaw," "Only Me and You" and "You and I (Have Traveled Far Together)," a duet featuring Jayanne, an up-and-coming singer who is also from Pampanga and was Raymond's fellow contestant on Search for a Star.

Big names return to Tavern

SHOW TIME

JANUARY is a month of big-name returnees at Tavern on the Square in Greenbelt 3, Makati City.

These include Freestyle, Side A, MYMP, Nyoy and Mannos, Fat Sessions and Wise Guys.

Freestyle goes onstage Mondays, Side A on Wednesdays.

MYMP headlines Tuesdays, and Wiseguys play Thursdays.

The Mannos had a one-night-only gig on Jan. 4, and will be back with MYMP on Jan. 25.

Area 1 took the spotlight on Jan. 8.

Fridays are for Fat Sessions, a big Tavern favorite.

All shows start at 9 p.m.

The month's special offering is "Mitch Valdes the Musical," set tomorrow, and Jan. 22, 29 and Feb. 5.

With Mel Villena as musical director, Mitch presents her seldom-seen side, a serious singer—but not without the wickedly wacky antics that she is well-loved for.

Declaring herself a "closet singer," Mitch describes the show as one that "traces my musical influences."

At Tavern, she will do rhythm and blues, as well as rock numbers—"music that I love singing.'"

For more information, call 757-4484 or 85.

SIDE A every Wednesday

MITCH Valdes

MYMP every Tuesday

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(DOLBY) MANO PO 3 GP

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2 (DOLBY)	KUNG FU HUSTLE PG13
3 (DOLBY)	BLADE TRINITY R13
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2.	AISHITE IMASU 1941
3.	HAPPY TOGETHER
4.	SPIRIT OF THE GLASS
5.	ENTENG KABISOTE

Gotesco Grand Central
(Caloocan) tel 364.3781

1	RESERVE
2	RESERVE
3	RESERVE
4 (SDDS)	RESERVE
5	RESERVE
6 (DOLBY)	RESERVE
7 (DTS)	RESERVE
8	RESERVE
9	RESERVE

Berma Cinema
(Baclaran) tel 879.2030 / 879.2029

1	SPIRIT OF THE GLASS
2	PANAGHOY SA SUBA

Lianas Cinema
(Alabang) tel 850.1276

1 (SDDS)	HUBAD NA MULTO
2	ENTENG KABISOTE
3	HELLWOLF
4 (DTS)	OUT OF REACH

Filinvest FESTIVAL CINEMA
(Muntinlupa) tel 850.3571 or 72

1 (DDS)	IMPOTENT MAN
2 (SDDS)	KUNG FU HUSTLE
3 (DTS)	OCEAN'S TWELVE
4 GOLD (DTS)	OCEAN'S TWELVE
5 GOLD (DOLBY)	BLADE TRINITY
6 GOLD (SDDS)	KUNG FU HUSTLE
7 GOLD (DOLBY)	RAISE YOUR VOICE
8	SO HAPPY TOGETHER
9	NANG NACK
10	GEORGE & THE DRAGON

Masagana CINEMA
(Pasay) tel 833.3290 / 833.3274

1	KUNG FU HUSTLE
2	BLADE TRINITY
3	IMPOTENT MAN

MARIKINA
Mandaluyong
tel 533.3851 / 533.3856

1	ENTENG KABISOTE
2	AFTER THE SUNSET
3	MANO PO
4	OCEAN'S TWELVE

starmall Movies
www.clickthecity.com.ph
(Las Pinas) tel (047) 237.7007

1 (DOLBY)	PANAGHOY SA SUBA
2	AROUND THE WORLD IN 80 DAYS

EASTWOOD CINEMAS
(Eastwood City Walk 2, Eastwood City E. Rodriguez Jr. Ave (C-5) Quezon City)
tel 687.6963 or 72

1 (DOLBY)	BLADE III
2 (DOLBY)	OCEAN'S TWELVE
3 (DOLBY)	KUNG FU HUSTLE
4 (DOLBY)	RAISE YOUR VOICE

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Araneta Center
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1 (Dolby)	OCEAN'S TWELVE
2 (SDDS)	BLADE TRINITY
3 (DTS)	KUNG FU HUSTLE
4 (Dolby)	SO HAPPY TOGETHER
5 (Dolby)	ENTENG KABISOTE

starmall Movies
www.clickthecity.com.ph
(Mandaluyong) tel 724.4986

1	RESERVED
2	RESERVED
3	KUNG FU HUSTLE
4 (DOLBY DIGITAL EX)	BLADE TRINITY
5	ENTENG KABISOTE

METROPOLIS star
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(Alabang) tel 850.4285

1	NANGNAK
2	KALABIT
3	KUNG FU HUSTLE
4	ENTENG KABISOTE
5 (DOLBY)	BLADE TRINITY
6	OCEAN'S TWELVE

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SHOW TIME

UST TV students' choice awards

THE UNIVERSITY of Santo Tomas will hold the first USTV Students' Choice Awards for television on Jan. 26 at 7 p.m. at the St. Martin de Porres Auditorium, Medicine Building, UST.

The award categories include best TV station, best news program, best documentary program, best magazine program, best talk show, best drama program, best comedy program, best female and best male anchors, best female and male hosts, and most popular music video, TV commercial and TV program.

This activity involves 30,000 students, from the nomination to the voting. The event is expected to be graced by the nominees, the UST community and media practitioners.

The awards, which evaluate TV programs according to Catholic standards, is organized by the UST Student Council and the Student Organization Coordinating Council in collaboration with the Office of the Secretary General and the Office for Student Affairs.

Visit the UST website at www.ust.edg.ph or call the Office of the Secretary General, 731-3119 or 731-3101 loc. 8219, or the Office of Student Affairs, 7313101 loc. 8267.

Debut at No. 1

THE PRODIGY. "One of the best comebacks of 2004."

THE PRODIGY'S new "Always Outnumbered, Never Outgunned" album debuted at the No. 1 spot in the UK charts.

After much anticipation, The Prodigy's fourth album is finally out and it promptly zoomed up to the No. 1 spot upon its release.

The listening public waited for seven long years before The Prodigy finally heeded the never-ending clamor for the new album, now released by Universal Records.

The Philippine promo campaign of The Prodigy's "Always Outnumbered, Never Outgunned" is sponsored by My Globe (Text Prodigy to 2346) and PONY—Let's Get It On.

The Prodigy took almost a decade to come up with the ultimate record that is described as "more punk than punk itself."

"Always Outnumbered, Never Outgunned" is touted as "one of the best comebacks of 2004."

The England-based Prodigy, composed of Liam Howlett, Keith Flint and Maxim, shot to fame in the mid-'90s as one of the first dance music acts to achieve the same level of success and media coverage of rock bands.

Their previous album, "The Fat of the Land," went No. 1 in 22 countries.

They are one of only eight British acts to go straight to No. 1 on the Billboard album charts, with the fastest-selling record of all time in the United Kingdom.

The band has never released a studio album since "The Fat of the Land" in 1997. The much-awaited "Always Outnumbered, Never Outgunned" is expected to figure prominently on global charts this season.

"Always Outnumbered, Never Outgunned" features 12 Liam Howlett-penned tracks, including the single "Girls," which finds The Prodigy returning to its old roots, with the focus firmly on the beats.

The new album is a trashy, adrenalized, sleaze-funk masterpiece.

Special guests who participated in the process of recording this musical milestone are Juliette Lewis, Princess Superstar, Ping Pong Bitches, Twista, Shahin Badar, Kool Keith, Liam Gallagher of Oasis and Paul Jackson.

All tracks were written and programmed by Liam Howlett.

The Prodigy lineup stays the same and will be returning for live dates this year. The King of Beats is back.

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E. Rodriguez Jr. Ave. (C-5) Quezon City
For inquiries, call:
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1 BLADE III
10:40, 1:05, 3:35, 6:05, 8:35, 11:00
R-13

2 OCEAN'S 12
11:15, 2:40, 5:25
8:10, 10:50
PG-13

3 KUNG FU HUSTLE
11:00, 1:25, 3:50
6:15, 8:40, 11:00
PG-13

4 RAISE YOUR VOICE
12:40, 3:20, 6:00
8:40, 11:10
GP

POWER PLANT CINEMA
Rockwell Center, Makati City ☎ Tel. No: 8981440-41
DOLBY DIGITAL SURROUND-EX

RAISE YOUR VOICE GP 12:50,3:10,5:30,7:50,10:10
OCEAN'S TWELVE PG13 11:40,2:10,4:40,7:10,9:40
BLADE 3: TRINITY R13 12:50,3:10,5:30,7:50,10:20
KUNG FU HUSTLE PG13 1:25,3:35,5:45,7:55,10:05
OCEAN'S TWELVE PG13 1:20,3:50,6:20,8:50
OCEAN'S TWELVE PG13 12:30,3:00,5.30,8:00,10:30

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GALLERIA 632-9115/16
1 OCEAN'S TWELVE • THX 1:45 4:30 7:15 10:00
2 BLADE TRINITY 10:20 12:40 3:00 5:20 7:40 10:00
3 IN SEARCH OF THE IMPOTENT MAN 10:45 1:00 3:15 5:30 7:45 10:00
4 RAISE YOUR VOICE 11:20 2:00 4:40 7:20 10:00
5 KUNG FU HUSTLE 10:20 12:40 3:00 5:20 7:40 10:00
6 OCEAN'S TWELVE 10:30 1:15 4:00 6:45 9:30
7 PANAGHOY SA SUBA 11:40 2:15 4:50 7:25 10:00
8 MANO PO 3 12:00 2:30 5:00 7:30 10:00
9 SO...HAPPY TOGETHER 11:10 1:20 3:30 5:40 7:50 10:00
10 SIGAW 11:40 2:10 4:40 7:10 9:40

ERMITA 536-7809 to 12
1 BLADE TRINITY 10:10 12:30 2:50 5:10 7:30 9:50
2 SO...HAPPY TOGETHER 10:35 12:50 3:05 5:20 7:35 9:50
3 OCEAN'S TWELVE 11:10 1:50 4:30 7:10 9:50
4 RAISE YOUR VOICE 10:10 12:30 2:50 5:10 7:30 9:50
5 IN SEARCH OF AN IMPOTENT MAN 10:35 12:50 3:05 5:20 7:35 9:50
6 RESERVE
7 KUNG FU HUSTLE 10:30 12:45 3:00 5:15 7:30 9:45

METRO EAST 682-8193/99 • 682-8280
1 MANO PO 3 11:00 1:05 3:10 5:15 7:20 9:30
2 NATIONAL TREASURE 11:00 2:30 4:00 6:30 9:00
3 SO...HAPPY TOGETHER 12:05 2:15 4:25 6:40 9:00
4 SIGAW 11:00 1:05 3:10 5:15 7:20 9:30
5 KUNG FU HUSTLE 12:30 3:00 5:30 8:00 10:30
6 OCEAN'S TWELVE 12:05 2:45 5:25 8:05
7 RAISE YOUR VOICE 11:50 2:30 5:10 7:50 10:30
8 BLADE TRINITY 11:50 2:30 5:10 7:50 10:30

NOVALICHES 935-3229/31
1 OCEAN'S TWELVE 11:50 2:40 5:30 8:25
2 MANO PO 3 11:10 1:30 3:50 6:10 8:30
3 SIGAW 11:10 1:30 3:50 6:10 8:30
4 NATIONAL TREASURE 10:40 1:00 3:30 6.00 8:30
5 KUNG FU HUSTLE 11:00 1:00 3:00 5:00 7:00 8:55
6 BLADE TRINITY 10:20 12:50 3:20 5:50 8:25
7 ENTENG KABISOTE 12:45 3:15 5:45 8.25
8 RESERVE

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1 OCEAN'S TWELVE 10:40 1:20 4:00 6:40 9:00
2 BLADE TRINITY 11:30 1:50 4:10 6:30 8:50
3 IN SEARCH OF AN IMPOTENT MAN 11:55 2:10 4:25 6:40 8:55
4 KUNG FU HUSTLE 11:30 1:50 4:10 6:30 8:50

Citisquare MALABON 288-0985 / 2575
1 SIGAW 11:10 1:30 3:50 6:10 8:30
2 MANO PO 3 11:10 1:30 3:50 6:10 8:30
3 ENTENG KABISOTE 10:50 1:15 3:40 6:05 8:30
4 SALAT SA LIGAYA 11:20 1:10 3:00 4:50 6:40 8:30

CAINTA 240-4661
1 OCEAN'S TWELVE 12:20 3:00 5:40 8:20
2 ENTENG KABISOTE 11:00 1:20 3:40 6:00 8:20
3 KUNG FU HUSTLE 10:55 1:25 3:55 6:25 8:55
4 BLADE TRINITY 12:50 3:30 6:10 8:50

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RAISE YOUR VOICE 12:10 2:50 5:30 8:10

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1 Dolby OCEAN'S TWELVE 12:00 2:50 5:40 8:30
2 SDDS BLADE: TRINITY 11:10 1:30 3:50 6:10 8:30
3 dts KUNG FU HUSTLE 11:20 1:40 4:00 6:20 8:40
4 Dolby SO HAPPY TOGETHER 11:20 1:30 3:40 5:50 8:00
5 Dolby ENTENG KABISOTE 12:30 3:00 5:30 8:00

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② KUNG FU HUSTLE FS 12:20PM, 2:45PM, 5:10PM, 7:35PM, LMF 10:00PM (PG-13)
③ BLADE TRINITY FS 12:00PM, 2:30PM, 5:00PM, 7:30PM, LMF 10:00PM (R-13)
④ RAISE YOUR VOICE FS 10:30AM, 1:10PM, 3:50PM, 6:30PM, LMF 9:10PM (GP)
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Blade the vampire slayer

By Oliver M. Pulumbarit
Contributor

REVIEW

THE FRANCHISE that kicked off Marvel Comics' winning streak at the box office is back with a third installment, "Blade: Trinity." Wesley Snipes returns as the stoic vampire-killing machine, Blade, in the action adventure that's purely for the popcorn-chomping, Dolby-deafened viewer.

David Goyer, who also penned the first two "Blade" movies and is known to comic book readers as a co-scribe of DC's "Justice Society of America" ("JSA"), takes over the directing reins. He also wrote this third story, which expands on the anti-hero's universe by giving the character new foes, allies, and a slightly different direction.

Blade has been systematically annihilating the vampire race (they're not mystical in nature here), until his enemies, this time led by femme fatale Danica (Parker Posey), conjure up a plan that their predecessors never even considered: Sic the cops on him!

She frames Blade by letting him mistakenly kill a human in full view of everyone. This human is actually a Familiar, a vampire wannabe who joyfully abets his blood-sucking masters. This leaves concrete evidence that sends the police scrambling to get the gun-toting "sociopath" off the streets and behind bars.

The purest vampire

That's only a fraction of Danica's grand plan for world domination. She and her tight crew of monster misfits revive the long-hibernating, legendary vampire king, Dracula (Dominic Purcell). As the purest, day-walking vampire, he is needed by the predators, not just to rid the humans of their sole protector, but also to extract from him the ability to defy sunlight.

With the combined threats of the law and the vamps (and their human pets), Blade sees no other option but to join forces with the Nightstalkers, a small, covert band of humans dedicated to wiping out the vampire menace once and for all.

Led by Hannibal (Ryan Reynolds) and Abigail (Jessica Biel), the team has been secretly working with Blade's mentor and only ally, Whistler (Kris Kristofferson), by sharing their sophisticated weapons and gadgetry.

So there. Expect fisticuffs, deafening explosions, fake blood, special effects, and unapologetic glam camera shots all over. It's an action movie colored by numbers, and it doesn't pretend to be more. We don't really wonder about the back stories the first two parts provided (well, kind of), and we really don't sympathize at all with the characters here.

NEITHER KINKY nor quirky. Blade joins forces with a band of humans dedicated to wiping out the vampire menace.

Snipes gets to show off his martial arts skills and stunts again, but this time he's joined by TV actors who've undergone interesting makeovers.

Reynolds (from the sitcom "Two Guys and a Girl") and Biel (from the very wholesome "Seventh Heaven") get to show some fighting skills, too, some skin, and the ability to cuss. Purcell (from the series "John Doe"), meanwhile, is an imposing and hunky Dracula. They translate well with every nicely choreographed kick, punch, or sword swing, surprisingly.

No more drama

But that's about it. There are cool ideas that lend to this expanded vampire mythology, such as the human storage facility (where brain-dead humans are kept alive for their blood), and the anti-vampire biological weapon (an airborne agent that can rapidly exterminate the race). Nifty ideas, for sure, but do we really care when we find out that Blade's life hangs in the balance once the latter is unleashed? No, sadly, not at all.

It's vampire-slaying minus the heart, let's just be clear on that. Blade wasn't that popular as a comic book character, before or after the movies were shown. He's given a personal angst as he's partly a vampire, but that drama isn't really touched upon in this installment.

"HEAVEN"-SENT. Jessica Biel, wholesome in "Seventh Heaven," shows some skin and fighting skills in "Blade."

The first movie dealt with that issue, and it's mentioned a few times here. This isn't bad, per se; it's a sign of moving on. But we root for him as much as we might care for a video game character with multiple lives.

Still, it fulfills whatever craving you might want out of a dark superhero movie. Brooding monster-killer? Check. Wise-cracking stud? Check. Hot fighting babe? Check.

Tableau of wacky villains? Check. Vampire dogs? Yes, those, too.

What's often missing is the sense of danger and affecting drama that would have made it at least a bit memorable.

"Blade: Trinity" doesn't give us the quirkiness and kinkiness of Anne Rice's vampires or Joss Whedon's "Buffy the Vampire Slayer" and "Angel." Nor does it mean to. Watching a third installment, however, you don't really want to know what's happened before, or where the franchise is headed. If the "Blade" movies were intended as a trilogy, it does end on a decent note.

But Marvel had better move on to fresher and potentially more cinematically enjoyable properties, and soon.

Hilary Duff: I still have curfews and I still get grounded

WHAT IS it like to be the unpopular new kid in town?

Hilary Duff, 17, admits she doesn't have much experience in that regard. But in the teen drama "Raise Your Voice," her character goes through that and more in her quest to follow her dream of being a singer.

Hilary was approached for the starring role in "Raise Your Voice" before she cut her first album and after she finished her "Lizzie McGuire" movie. In "Raise Your Voice," she plays Terri.

Is it the nervous, raw energy that keeps you going?

I think so. The energy is addicting almost. Even though it's really hard work, I don't think you could do it unless you loved it. I love it, but it definitely keeps me going. A new place every night—doing this, doing that—it's crazy.

In "Raise Your Voice," you're playing the outsider. In real life, you've been a star a while. How do you get those feelings of not belonging to come out for an acting job?

It was hard. People have been asking me today like what the most challenging part of the movie was, and it wasn't the crying scenes. I think that's much easier than trying to make people laugh. Crying on command is not that difficult. But the parts that were harder for me were after the tragedy happens to Terri in her life, it's kind of like just like a closed-off, numb feeling. She doesn't feel any emotion—no happiness, no sadness. She's kind of like nothing. That was the hardest thing for me.

And then going to the school and feeling like the outsider, I kind of learned how to do that a lot with Lizzie McGuire because she was the dork that didn't really fit in. And everybody kind of made Terri feel very unwelcome at the school at first.

Is your relationship with your mother similar to the relationship your character has with her mom in this movie?

My relationship with my mom is so amazing. We never got to have that stage that people go through, like when you're 13 and you think you're too cool for your parents, when you're embarrassed by them and stuff. We never went through that because I was constantly working and she constantly had to be there. We just became best friends. I tell her everything. She's really my role model and my inspiration. She's such a good person and such a strong person. A lot of people give her flak for being strong and being smart, but I think I envy that in her.

Did you have curfews growing up?

I still have curfews and sometimes I get grounded, which I is kind of weird to me.

For what reason?

Like if [my mom's] asked me to do something more than once or twice. I always get in trouble for not pulling my car into the garage, because if I don't pull my car in, her car won't fit. So I get in trouble for that, but it only lasts for a day. Usually it's an excuse so I'll stay home and hang out with her.

What time do you have to be in?

It all depends. It depends on where I am, it depends on what I'm doing. It depends on if I have to work the next day. She gives me a lot of freedom and I think that it must scare her, you know? Having me leave the house by myself, with my car. I don't take security around with me just because it's like I don't want that. I want to be able to be free. She has to have a lot of faith in me and trust in me to be able to do that, even though it must scare her. But she does. She gives me so much freedom. I can be home at 1 or 2 sometimes. And if I'm working the next day, I'll be really good and come home at 10.

You have good onscreen chemistry with Jason Ritter. What's your relationship with him?

I loved working with Jason. He's really good at making everybody laugh. He's really fun, really lighthearted on set. We really did have a good time together. We didn't get to work together that much, but I think it came across good onscreen. Kind of like the sneaky brother and sister relationship.

I think the scene in the car, even though it was really sad because he doesn't end up sticking around for long, was really fun. Singing together—I totally do stuff like that with my sister in the car.

Do boys approach you like Oliver James does in this movie, or is it more complicated because you're famous?

I hate that word—the "f" word—but I guess it's more complicated because of that. It's really sad. I don't have a boyfriend and I'm not dating anybody. I read that I'm dating new people all the time but I'm definitely not.

Like the singer from Good Charlotte.

Actually we're good friends. I like his band and everything. It really sucks that people say I'm dating this person, I'm dating this person… and make accusations that aren't true with my personal life. Then of course everybody has their opinion on what's right and wrong. It's hard some times, you know? I'm not dating him and I don't have a boyfriend.

I'd like to date someone normal but how am I supposed to date someone normal when I don't go to regular school, I'm never in town, and I'm always traveling? Nobody normal will ever come up and talk to me.

Why is the "feud" between you and Lindsay Lohan still big news to people?

I have a feeling that if I was a normal girl that went to a normal high school, the high school would probably talk about it for two days and then it would be over. But just because people know who I am and people know who she is, everybody loves to talk about it. I don't know her. I don't care. If you read all the interviews, I haven't said anything about it. I try and keep my mouth shut. That's all I can say.

ABNORMAL. "I'd like to date someone normal but how am I supposed to date someone normal when I don't go to regular school, I'm never in town, and I'm always traveling? Nobody normal will ever come up and talk to me," says Duff.